

## SOCIAL ASPECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS

The presentation and application of an analytical framework for the critical examination of mass media policy, content, and effects. Readings, discussions, and demonstrations develop an approach to (1) the investigation of mass-media decision-making, (2) the analysis of large systems of media messages, and (3) the study of consequences of exposure to them. Weekly exercises and a term project provide opportunities to develop special interests in media research and analysis.

Reading material for the course will be (1) reprints of articles and (2) a current issue of the following journals: VARIETY, ADVERTISING AGE, ELECTRONIC MEDIA, BROADCASTING MAGAZINE, JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION, JOURNAL OF BROADCASTING, JOURNALISM QUARTERLY.

The work of the course consists of (1) active participation in each class section reflecting previous discussion and readings; (2) brief oral reports reflecting preparation for each session and participation in discussion sessions (every third week); (3) one-page written exercises (weekly); (4) a midterm project proposal; (5) final project report (oral and written). The oral report will be scheduled during the last two weeks. The written report will be due the last class meeting. There will be no final exam. Questions, comments, critiques regarding class work are welcome at any time; if written, they should be attached to any of the exercises or written reports. Drafts of midterm and final papers may be submitted two weeks before the papers are due and will be returned with comments in time for revisions, if any. Written work should be typed on plain white paper, titled and identified, and, when more than one page, stapled.

CONSULT A STYLEBOOK FOR EFFECTIVE AND CONSISTENT FORM IN ORGANIZING PAPERS, HEADINGS AND SUBHEADING, PRESENTATION OF TABLES AND FIGURES (IF ANY), REFERENCE STYLE, ETC.

## FIRST WEEK: PREVIEW

Introduction to the course. Preliminary definitions and history. Terms of perception (ACPV).

For next week: (1) read: "A Curious Journey;" "Communication and Social Environment." (2) Bring to class a large ad depicting two or more persons. Consider applying to this ad the terms of perception (ACPV); see "ways of observing." Prepare to present your analysis at the next meeting. (3) Bring to class a one-page paper defining, in one sentence each, the following terms (based on the readings): communication, mass communications, message, publication, public (both adjective and noun), mass public.

## SECOND WEEK: WAYS OF OBSERVING

Discuss the "journey," definitions of basic terms. A model of communication. Demonstration of ACPV and implications. Analysis of complex images (ACPV) vs. message systems (AETS).

For next week: (1) Read "A Theory of Communication and Its Implications for Teaching;" "The Process of Communication" (optional); "Cultural Indicators: The Third Voice." (2) Prepare to discuss the uses of a model as analytical tool; the implications of the perceptual demonstrations for mass media analysis; the 3-way division of "cultural indicators" (and this course), i.e. Institutional Process Analysis (IPA), Message System Analysis (MSA), and Cultivation Analysis (CA). (3) Bring to class a one-page analysis of a selected ad or other complex image in terms of ACPV. (Staple the ad or a copy to the paper). (4) Scan the 7 journals, try to classify selected articles into IPA, MSA, and CA categories, and prepare to suggest a possible class project problem of special interest to you in each of the three categories at the next meeting. S

## THIRD WEEK: DISCUSSION

Review model, demonstrations of terms of perception, application to image analysis. Discuss 3-way division of "journey," ideas for individual (or group) projects. Consider: What is a good problem? Preview midterm proposal outline (4 W's & H); IPA power roles, etc.

For next week: (1) Select from ADVERTISING AGE and ELECTRONIC MEDIA items that illustrate critical incidents, each of the power roles, and both substantive and procedural applications of power (leverage). (2) Bring a one-page analysis of an incident or report applying as many terms of institutional process analysis as possible, drawing some conclusions about their relative importance.

## FOURTH WEEK: INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS ANALYSIS (IPA); MARKET STRUCTURE

Power roles and their applications. Diagram of market structure. Media appeals for advertising support. Cost per thousand.

For next week: (1) Select from VARIETY and BROADCASTING MAGAZINE same as above. (2) Bring another one-page analysis, as above, based on the material in these journals, also reflecting influence of market structure, if appropriate. (3) Select and prepare to discuss items in "Where Things Stand" section of BROADCASTING in terms of power role scheme. (4) Select from the three scholarly quarterlies one or more articles that involve of IPA, and prepare to critique in terms of (a) 4W's & H, (b) power roles.

## FIFTH WEEK; IPA - RATINGS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Review of IPA examples, influence of market structure. Market "quality" and the "women's market." Final discussion of project proposal criteria, format. Reference sources.

For next week: (1) Bring 3-4 page project proposal (midterm paper). Feasible and acceptable proposals will be executed and developed into the term project and final report. Subsequent exercises may be related to this project if and when appropriate.

## SIXTH WEEK: DISCUSSION; MIDTERM PAPERS DUE

Review of IPA, project proposals. Preview: MSA—from ACPV to AETS.

For next week: (1) Review "Message System Analysis" section of "Cultural Indicators: The Third Voice," with special attention to the AETS scheme (Figure 2), Read the extended version, "Mass Media Discourse: Message System Analysis as a Component of Cultural Indicators." Also, "On Content Analysis and Critical Research in Mass Communications," with special attention to possible problems for inquiry. (2) Select a manageable sample of current news material (e.g. the front page of a daily newspaper), decide on a problem, sample, instrument of analysis (at least two measures from AETS), conduct a simple analysis (test reliability), construct a Table, and bring to class a one-page paper containing the Table and one or two paragraphs of interpretation.

## SEVENTH WEEK: MESSAGE SYSTEM ANALYSIS (MSA); NEWS

Review of AETS application to news analysis. Preview of character, relationships, action, thematic analysis.

For next week: (1) Read selected article(s) in the scholarly quarterlies reporting results of MSA; and one of the following groups of studies: "Teacher Image in Mass Culture, etc.," "Images Across Cultures, etc.;" "Sin, Suffer, Repent, etc.;" OR "Press Perspectives in World Communication;" "Ideological Perspectives and Political Tendencies in News Reporting;" "The Many Worlds of the World's Press;" OR "The World According to Television;" "Aging With Television, etc.;" "Science on Television, etc.;" "Health and Medicine on Television." (2) Prepare a brief oral critique in 4W's & H format on the journal article and group of studies selected; (3) Bring in a one-page report based on the demonstration in class or other suggested topic.

## EIGHTH WEEK: MSA -- NEWS, FICTION AND DRAMA

Review of critiques, selected MSA study proposals. Characterizations and relationships; comparative analysis; functional analysis; thematic structure; special topics in MSA.

For next week: Same as (1) - (3) above on another journal article and group of studies.

## NINTH WEEK: DISCUSSION

Review of MSA problems, methods, proposals, studies. General discussion of work so far. Preview of effects and cultivation analysis.

For next week: (1) Review cultivation analysis in "The Third Voice," read "Living with Television: The Dynamics of the Cultivation Process," "Political Functions of Television Viewing," and the latest Violence Profile report. (2) Prepare a brief oral report on the difference between effects and cultivation research methodology, and the concept of "mainstreaming." (3) Write a one-page proposal for a cultivation study, including 5 questions with alternative (TV and "other") answers.

**TENTH WEEK: CULTIVATION ANALYSIS**

Review of cultivation studies, proposal. Optional plan to conduct a small-scale cultivation study. Scheduling of class reports, final report.

**ELEVENTH AND SUBSEQUENT WEEK(S): TERM PROJECT CLASS AND FINAL REPORTS**