LMC 2400 INTRO TO MEDIA STUDIES
Fall 2018 | MWF 9:05-9:50 | Clough 129

Instructor: Mariam Asad // missasad@gatech.edu
Office Hours: By appointment only, email to set up a date/time.

*"We read books to find out who we are. What other people, real or imaginary, do and think and feel [...]
is an essential guide to our understanding of what we ourselves are and may become."*

*"If a book told you something when you were fifteen, it will tell it to you again when you're fifty,
though you may understand it so differently that it seems you're reading a whole new book."*

–Ursula K. Le Guin

Course Description
In this course we will learn how to read and interpret media artifacts through a variety of theoretical lenses. Our analysis will be anchored in both the form and content of a text and will take a critical approach to understanding embedded meanings, motivations, and representations in media. This course will primarily focus on screen-based media from the 20th century, including film, television, and advertising. Course readings will offer important concepts and vocabulary for analyzing media, but will be useful for understanding works of art and other cultural artifacts. (Prerequisites: ENGL 1102)

Course Objectives
After taking this course, successful students will have an advanced understanding of media studies and will have developed the following skills:

• A broad understanding of the historical development and cultural impact of various media.

• A set of theoretical tools for analyzing media texts critically.

• A diverse vocabulary of formal and cultural elements of screen-based media texts and other cultural artifacts.

• The ability to communicate analysis clearly and concretely through both written and oral communication.

• How to find and use scholarly research through GT library resources.

• Respectful, thoughtful, and professional group discussion and collaboration.

Participation
Class participation is **mandatory**—please note that your in-class participation makes **almost half of your total grade**. You will be successful in this class if you show up and meaningfully contribute to group discussion having done all the readings before class.

I expect each of you to come to each class prepared to discuss course material. Participation in class discussion is important because it allows you to explore the class readings and concepts with your peers and, in the process, discover meanings and issues that you would not discover on your own. In-class participation challenges you to continuously question, refine, and articulate your own ideas and interpretations. Please note I do not expect each of you to have fully formed and nuanced understandings of each assigned reading, but I do expect you to engage with each reading to the best of your abilities (e.g. asking questions, applying concepts to your own experiences, thinking of relevant examples, etc.).

Attendance
I will not take attendance, but keep in mind that it is difficult to participate in class discussion if you are not present. If you know you will have personal conflicts or scheduling issues that will interfere with any deadlines, please email me *ahead of time* so we can discuss alternate arrangements.

Technology Policy
Laptops and cell phones may be used for note taking and other forms of in-class work, however general web surfing/messaging/etc. or disruption (e.g. ringing phones) will result in penalties to your participation grade. If technology use becomes too distracting, this policy may change to better maintain respect for each other and our classroom discussions.

Withdrawal Deadline
October 27th, 2018 at 4pm EST.

Accessibility and Special Needs
I will make every effort to accommodate any needs around health and accessibility, particularly around learning support, or mental or emotional health issues. However, in order to support you, you must register with ADAPTS. Once you have done so, please email me so we can figure out the best means to support you: http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/

Debate, Diversity, and Respect
In this class, we will present and discuss a variety of perspectives. Although you may not always agree with the perspectives of others, I expect you to be respectful of other values, beliefs, and identities. Repeated inappropriate or abusive comments and/or behavior will not be tolerated and will be escalated to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Dean of Ivan Allen College. If you feel that your perspectives are being ignored or slighted, or if you in any way feel uncomfortable in the classroom, please contact me immediately.

Community Agreements
As an educator, it is my responsibility to ensure that our classroom is a supportive environment for everyone. As a student, it is your responsibility to act in good faith, with compassion and respect, towards me and your peers. We will discuss our community agreements during the first week of class. A copy of it will be uploaded to Canvas.

Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy
The Georgia Tech Honor Code is very explicit about plagiarism as "the deliberate use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment," "appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of his or her writings, or language or ideas of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind." If caught plagiarizing, you will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. The full GT Honor Code is available online: http://osi.gatech.edu/content/honor-code.

Required Books
All readings will be made available via Canvas. I mostly draw from: *Keywords for Media Studies* (Ouellette & Gray), *Media and Cultural Studies* (Durham & Kellner), and *Critical Terms for Media Studies* (Mitchell & Hansen).

Relevant Examples and Media Artifacts
Please do not use any of the following as examples in your coursework: Vine posts, Quentin Tarantino films, or episodes of South Park, Family Guy, or Rick and Morty.

Additional Student Resources
- For media: Videodrome, Charis Books, Atlanta Public Library, (http://afpls.org), Archive.org, Kanopy (http://gatech.kanopy.com)

- Georgia Tech Academic Support Resources: http://success.gatech.edu/programs/resources

- Georgia Tech Counseling Center: http://www.counseling.gatech.edu/content/services

- Please note that **I am a mandated reporter** and am legally obligated to report any sexual violence reported to me. Georgia Tech offers confidential support for sexual or relationship violence through VOICE, which also contains links to local and non-GT resources: https://healthinitiatives.gatech.edu/resources

Contact
When in doubt, please contact me! You can reach me via email: missasad@gatech.edu. Please put "LMC 2400" in the subject header when sending me email. You should expect a response from me within 24-48 hours. **Any emails sent to me the night before a deadline will not be answered**.

Acknowledgements and Attribution
Thanks to Sarah Schoemann, Hira Mahmood, Daniel Joseph, and Dan Greene for their advice and support in building this syllabus.

GRADING

Participation	40%
Mini Response Papers (best 5, 3% each)	15%
Midterm Paper: Alternative Media Analysis	15%
Leading Classroom Discussion	10%
Final Group Assignment: Media Exhibition	20%
Total Grade	**100%**

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Theme	Date	Reading/Screening (all on Canvas)	Due
1	Media & Texts	~~Mon Aug 20~~	~~N/A~~	
		~~Wed Aug 22~~	• ~~Syllabus~~ • ~~Community Agreements~~	~~**Consider readings to lead discussion**~~
		~~Fri Aug 24~~	• ~~McLuhan, "Medium is the…"~~ • ~~CT: "Mass Media"~~	
2	Semiotics & Images	~~Mon Aug 27~~	• ~~Barthes, "Rhetoric of the Image"~~ • ~~KW: "Myth"~~	~~**Discussion groups assigned (8x4, 1x3)**~~
		~~Wed Aug 29~~	• ~~CT: "Image"~~ • ~~Streeter online exercise~~ • ~~In-class semiotics exercise~~	
		Fri Aug 31	• In-class research tutorial	
3	Semiotics & Images	~~Mon Sep 3~~	N/A	**NO CLASS**
		Wed Sep 5	• Barsam's *Looking at Movies* • In-class screening: *Do the Right Thing*	**TUES 9/4 by 5pm: submit group's top 3 reading choices**
		Fri Sep 7	• Film text/vocab stuff lecture • Kw: "Ideology"	**Midterm paper topics submitted, 5pm (see Canvas quiz/survey)**
4	Power, Ideology, & Hegemony	Mon Sep 10	• KW: "Power" • Gramsci + Marx, Engels PDF	

			• In-class semiotics exercise 2	
		Wed Sep 12 *	• KW: "Hegemony" • Benjamin, "Works of Art and…"	
		Fri Sep 14	• In-class screening: "Dirty Computer"	
5	Political Economy	Mon Sep 17 *	• Althusser, "Ideological State…"	**Team TheBreakingBadPlaceonYubabaTube.com**
		Wed Sep 19 *	• Herman & Chomsky, "Propaganda"	**Team PushingJanesSoulintotheBananaStand**
		Fri Sep 21	• In-class screenings/bias exercise • Class check-in	
6	Culture/Industry	Mon Sep 24 *	• Horkheimer & Adorno, "Culture Industry"	**Team MotherofMouseratMontoya**
		Wed Sep 26 *	• Hebdige, "Subculture"	**Team OliviaBlancheKiller**
		Fri Sep 28 *	• Bourdieu x2	**Team RandomActsofBettyDinerWafflesinPhiladelphia**
7	Culture/Industry	Mon Oct 1 *	• Hall, "Encoding/Decoding"	**Team ChiklisCindiCheddar**
		Wed Oct 3 *	• Schiller, "Not Yet the Post-Imperialist Era"	
		Fri Oct 5	• In-class screening • Class check-in	**Midterm paper due, 5pm**
8	Identity & Representation	~~Mon Oct 8~~	N/A	**NO CLASS**
		Wed Oct 10 *	• KW: "Othering" • hooks, "Eating the Other"	**Team RoseIIBoyleRobinson**
		Fri Oct 12 *	• KW: "Gaze" • Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure"	**Team MyHeroNeutralityParty**
9	Identity & Representation	Mon Oct 15 *	• Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes"	
		Wed Oct 17	• In-class screening: Agnès Varda	
		Fri Oct 19	• Vice, "NOISEY: Atlanta 2" • Carmichael, "Culture Wars"	
10	Alternative Cultural Texts: Topic TBD	Mon Oct 22	• Guest lecturer! Readings TBD	
		Wed Oct 24	• In-class presentations (3mins)	**Show and Tell: Cool Media**
		Fri Oct 26	• In-class presentations (3mins)	**Last day to drop: Saturday 10/27, 4pm!**

11	~magic & spooks~	Mon Oct 29 *	• Sconce, "Haunted Media"	**Team RandomActsofBearsBeetsandBabyCobra**
		Wed Oct 31 *	• Bakhtin x3	
		~~Fri Nov 2~~	N/A	**NO CLASS / final project groups assigned**
12	Group Work	~~Mon Nov 5~~	• Final project group meeting, planning	**NO CLASS**
		~~Wed Nov 7~~		**NO CLASS**
		~~Fri Nov 9~~	• I mean it!!!!!!! Don't waste this week!!	**NO CLASS**
13	Alternative Cultural Texts: City as a Text	Mon Nov 12	• Readings/screenings TBD	
		Wed Nov 14	• Readings/screenings TBD	
		Fri Nov 16	N/A	**In class work period (final project)**
14	Final Project: In-Class Work Session	Mon Nov 19	N/A	**In class work period (final project)**
		~~Wed Nov 21~~	N/A	**NO CLASS**
		~~Fri Nov 23~~	N/A	**NO CLASS**
15	Final Presentations	Mon Nov 26	• Group presentations (2 groups)	
		Wed Nov 28	• Group presentations (2 groups)	
		Fri Nov 30	• Group presentations (2 groups)	
16	**LAST CLASS!**	Mon Dec 3	• Group presentation (1 group)	**LAST CLASS!**
		~~Fri Dec 7~~	N/A	**LAST DAY TO SUBMIT WORK**