

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
FALL SEMESTER 2007**

**EDUC 488-4
SPECIAL TOPICS: MEDIA, EDUCATION, CULTURE &
SOCIETY
(E01.00)**

Dr. Özlem Sensoy
Office: EDB 8654
Phone: 268-6795

email: ozlem@sfu.ca

Wednesdays, 16:30-20:20
EDB 8651/52

By influencing public norms, perceptions, expectations, hopes, fears, desires, and angsts about diversity, the mass media play a powerful role in the social construction of knowledge about race, ethnicity, religion, gender, culture, sexual orientation, and other aspects of diversity.
Carlos E. Cortés, *The Children are Watching*, p. 21

Prerequisites:

This course is open to undergraduates in all Faculties who have completed sixty (60) credit hours of coursework (at least 4 of which must be diversity-related coursework in any department – to be approved by instructor).

Course Description:

Applying the educational concept of societal curriculum to media representations, this course takes an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the role of media and popular culture in educating about society.

Specifically, the course will explore racial, ethnic, gender, sexual, class, and other socially-constructed differences, and examine how these representations reproduce, or challenge, existing norms and power structures in mainstream society.

This course serves as an introduction to key concepts and authors in fields including critical education studies, critical pedagogy, media studies, sociology, and cultural studies. It will provide undergraduate students in education the conceptual language with which to examine, understand, and respond to the educative power of pop culture and bring it into their classrooms in meaningful and substantive ways.

For undergraduate students in fields other than education, it will introduce them to the educational

concepts and offer them an introduction to the breadth of scholarship in education (what we study beyond teacher education, and professional development).

This course will also be cross-listed as Education 710 for students in the Masters program in Inclusion & Diversity in the Faculty of Education.

Topics will include these and others:

- TV & social class – the bumbling idiots
- Music Videos & masculinity/femininity -- “girl power”
- Sport & Indigenous mascots
- Hollywood – Bollywood
- Discourse and How we talk about the “Supercrip”
- Consumerism, capitalism, advertising – Living in McWorld
- Kid culture – Disney... is it “just entertainment”?
- Violence & terror

Course Objectives include:

The course activities are organized with attention to the following learning objectives. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze one’s own values, ideologies and relationship to socially-constructed categories of difference;
- examine the influence of media and popular culture representations on one’s own knowledge about socially-constructed groups;
- describe and analyze media and popular culture representations of social differences, particularly as related to race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and social class;
- describe and examine the role of institutional power and privilege in these representations;
- think critically about the historical, social, and politicized contexts within which education takes place;
- improve one’s critical thinking, listening, writing, and speaking skills;
- gain proficiency with key concepts and issues in the fields of critical education studies, critical pedagogy, media studies, sociology, and cultural studies;
- develop the writing strategies with which to cogently communicate the complexity of these concepts and their relationships.

Required Learning Activities & Evaluation:

ASSIGNMENTS	DUE DATE	VALUE
Attendance, Participation, Homework	Ongoing	15 %
In class free-writes/ responses to readings	Ongoing (3 total)	15 %
ASSIGNMENT 1: Self analysis (4-6 PP)	Week 5	15 %
ASSIGNMENT 2: Critical media analysis		

(6-8 PP) ASSIGNMENT 3: FINAL PAPER (10-12 PP) presentation + written	Week 8 (presentation=10+written=30) Week 13	15 % 40%
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Required texts:

1. Cortés, C. E. (2000). *The Children are watching: How the media teach about diversity*. New York: Teachers College Press. **ISBN-10:** 0807739375; **ISBN13:** 9780807739372
Cost: \$21.39 on Amazon.ca but also available used through various online bookstores. A limited number will be ordered for the SFU bookstore.
2. Macedo, D. & Steinberg, S. R. (2007). *Critical media literacy: A reader*. New York: Peter Lang. **ISBN-10:** 082048668X; **ISBN-13:** 978-0820486680
Cost: \$54.13 on Amazon.ca but also available used through various online bookstores. A limited number will be ordered for the SFU bookstore.
3. Course reader (separate for 488 and 710 students – extra theoretical & research readings for 710)/ obtain from instructor.
Cost TBD (approx \$10.00)