

CMN 144, Media Entertainment

Fall 2014

MW, 12 – 2 1204 Haring Hall

Dr. Taylor

Office hours: after class Wednesday, 394 Kerr hall

Overview:

CMN 144 focuses on key questions of entertainment media—why people make the media choices they do, and what they get out of it. Course readings and lecture will focus on prominent theories of media use and enjoyment as well as research that support or challenge those theories. Course discussion will focus on the critical examination and synthesis of theory and research, as well as the application of theory and research to familiar media content.

Class Format:

The course will combine lecture, small group activities, and class discussion. This format means that attendance is important for success in the class. The expectation is that each student will attend class each day having completed the assigned readings and prepared to participate.

Assessment and Grading

Your final grade will be calculated based on the following:

Midterm exam	35%
Final exam	35%
Papers	30%

Exams. Midterm and final exams will be largely multiple-choice and true-false, but may also include short-answer or short essay questions. The final will not be truly cumulative, but will necessarily require you to integrate ideas from the material covered on the midterm. Exams will include three kinds of questions: a) knowledge questions that assess the degree to which you have learned and understood material covered in class; b) synthesis questions that assess the degree to which you are connecting various concepts covered in class discussion and readings; and c) application questions that assess the degree to which you can apply what you have learned to new situations, media content, and so on. The average score on each test will be at least a C+; if the class average falls below 79%, a curve will be applied.

Papers. Writing assignments will be graded both for content and the way in which that content is communicated. Papers must conform to APA format and be free from grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. They should be insightful, well organized, and clear. PAPER GRADES WILL NOT BE CURVED.

Ideas paper. Your ideas paper is a **1-page** (300 - 350 word) paper in which you identify which of the approved questions you wish to write about in your term paper and begin to explore that idea. On the back of the page, you will **list at least 8 journal articles** you anticipate using in your term paper, cited **using APA style**. The paper must be handed in physically; electronic submission will not be accepted. Late idea papers are penalized by 25% per day late. **2 minutes late is still late**, and will be penalized 25%. 24 hours and 2 minutes late will be penalized 50%, etc.... The ideas paper must be done individually, not collaboratively

The Term Paper is a 10-12-page research paper answering one of a series of set questions using empirical research literature as the backbone of your answer; this paper will, ideally, be written collaboratively. Your paper should provide an insightful, dispassionate review of and reflection on the research literature; it should not be persuasive, inflammatory, or entertaining in its tone. Personal anecdotes should be avoided, as should lengthy direct quotes. A quote, after all, is not evidence; research findings are evidence.

Ten pages means 10 pages of text; this does not include cover page, list of references, or abstract. Times New Roman, 12-point font should be used. Everything should be double-spaced, but extra spaces should not be skipped between paragraphs or sections of the paper. One-inch margins should be employed. For other formatting issues, please refer to any credible APA style guide, such as the online formatting guide linked to the course web site (under the Writing folder on the Resources page).

Each paper must be handed in physically. Electronic submission of papers that are not also handed in physically ON TIME will not be accepted. Late papers are penalized by 25% per day late. **2 minutes late is still late**, and will be penalized 25%. 24 hours and 2 minutes late will be penalized an additional 25%, etc....

Sources

For the writing assignments, appropriate journals include (but are not limited to):

- *Adolescence*
- *Communication Research*
- *Developmental Psychology*
- *Health Communication*
- *Human Communication Research*
- *International Journal on Media Management*
- *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*
- *Journal of Communication*
- *Journal of Health Communication*
- *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*
- *Journal of Sex Research*
- *Journal of the American Medical Association*
- *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*
- *Media Psychology*
- *Sex Roles*

There are several strategies for finding relevant articles:

- Use electronic databases available through the library's home page. PsycINFO will be most helpful for most topics; PubMed is good for health-related topics.
- Plunder the references lists of articles assigned for class. Also check on PsycINFO to see what articles have referred to them.
- Ask a librarian for help getting started.
- Just to be clear, no, you don't have to pay for every article, and no, just doing a Google search isn't going to help.

Questions for the term paper:

1. What **harms**, if any, are associated with playing massively multi-player online role-playing games?
2. Select one genre of music. For that genre of music, do the following: a) Identify the personality and context factors that predict the selection, use, or enjoyment of that genre of music; b) identify the effects of exposure to that type of music (if any); and c) describe the relationship between those predictors and effects. *Be warned that writing about drug use and rave music is an almost certain recipe for failure; the research literature will lead you astray.*
3. What effect does exposure to sexually **explicit** media content (by one spouse or both) have on marital relationships?
4. Food advertisements are likely linked to obesity, at least among children. Identify HOW exposure to food ads causes child viewers to become more at risk for obesity. DO NOT SIMPLY DOCUMENT THAT THE RELATIONSHIP EXISTS—explain the process by which the advertisements influence obesity. Note that this is a question about MEDIATION, and that, as with each question, you must back up your assertions with research findings.
5. What is the role of perceived realism in the influence of violent media content on viewers' violent attitudes and behavior?
6. What content factors predict the financial success of motion pictures? Where necessary, **reconcile contradictory findings**.
7. What factors cause or contribute to the experience of parasocial interaction with media personae? Consider including media, personality, and situational factors.

Schedule

October 1	Welcome, grading & expectations	
October 3	Recap of Entertainment media & their industries	Dowd, T. J. (2004). Concentration and diversity revisited: Production logics and the U. S. mainstream recording market, 1940 – 1990. <i>Social Forces</i> , 82, 1411 – 1455.
October 8	Uses & Gratifications Theory	Nabi, R. L., Stitt, C. R., Halford, J., & Finnerty, K. L. (2006). Emotional and cognitive predictors of the enjoyment of reality-based and fictional television programming: An elaboration of the uses and gratifications perspective. <i>Media Psychology</i> , 8, 421 – 427.
October 10 (October 12: add deadline)	WRITING	How to Write a Social Scientific Paper: A Really Good Day to Be in Class
October 15	Theories of affective motivation	Zillmann, D. (1988). Mood management through communication choices. <i>American Behavioral Scientist</i> , 31, 327 – 340. IDEAS PAPER DUE 10 am
October 17	Enjoyment	Sherry, J. L. (2004). Flow and media enjoyment. <i>Communication Theory</i> , 14, 238 – 347.
October 22	Entertainment	Vorderer, P., Klimmt, C., & Ritterfeld, U. (2004). Enjoyment: At the heart of media entertainment. <i>Communication Theory</i> , 14, 388 – 408. Oliver, M. B., & Green, S. (2001). Development of gender differences in children's responses to animated entertainment. <i>Sex Roles</i> , 45, 67 – 88.
October 24	Complex entertainment theories	Oliver, M. B., & Bartsch, A. (2010). Appreciation as audience response: Exploring entertainment gratifications beyond hedonism. <i>Human Communication Research</i> , 36, 53 – 81.
October 29	Interactivity & Parasocial Interaction	Vorderer, P., Knobloch, S., & Schramm, H. (2001). Does entertainment suffer from interactivity? The impact of watching an interactive TV movie on viewers' experience of entertainment. <i>Media Psychology</i> , 3, 343 – 363.
October 31	Fans	McCutcheon, L. E., Lange, R., & Houran, J. (2002). Conceptualization and measurement of celebrity worship. <i>British Journal of Psychology</i> , 93, 67 – 87.
November 5		MIDTERM

November 7	Music	Selfhout, M. H. W., Delsing, M. J. M. H., terBogt, T. F. M., & Meeus, W. H. J. (2008). Heavy metal and hip-hop style preferences and externalizing problem behavior: A two-wave longitudinal study. <i>Youth & Society</i> , 39, 435 – 452.
November 14	sports	Robinson, M. J., Trail, G. T., Dick, R. J., & Gillentine, A. J. (2005). Fans vs. spectators: An analysis of those who attend intercollegiate football games. <i>Sport Marketing Quarterly</i> , 14, 43 – 53.
November 19	comedy	Ruch, W. (1988). Sensation seeking and the enjoyment of structure and content of humour: Stability of findings across four samples. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i> , 9, 861 – 871.
November 21	violence and horror	Zillmann, D., Weaver, J. B., Mundorf, N., & Aust, C. F. (1986). Effects of an opposite-gender companion's affect to horror on distress, delight, and attraction. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 51, 586 – 594.
November 26	the erotic	Paul, B., & Shim, J. W. (2008). Gender, sexual affect, and motivations for Internet pornography. <i>International Journal of Sexual Health</i> , 20, 187 – 199. TERM PAPER DUE at 12:10
November 28	video games	Lucas, K., & Sherry, J. L. (2004). Sex differences in video game play: A communication-based explanation. <i>Communication Research</i> , 31, 499 – 512.
December 3	persuasion, learning, & entertainment	Law, S. & Braun, K. A. (2000). I'll have what she's having: Gauging the impact of product placements on viewers. <i>Psychology & Marketing</i> , 17, 1059 – 1075. Hollander, B. A. (2005). Late-night learning: Do entertainment programs increase political campaign knowledge for young viewers? <i>Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media</i> , 49, 402 – 416.
December 5	harmful effects of entertainment media	Villani, S. (2001). Impact of media on children and adolescents: A 10-year review of the research. <i>Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry</i> , 40,
Friday, December 14, 6 p.m.		<u>FINAL EXAM</u>