Course packet available at Alpha Print in Dinkytown
A reading packet for this class is available at Alpha Print. You are required to bring this packet to every class. We will use the readings throughout each class and may refer to previous readings as the semester goes on. I encourage you to read thoroughly and carefully. I encourage you to react to the readings. Most of these readings were designed by the authors to make readers question their assumptions and beliefs. You will not agree with everything we read in class and may be deeply impacted by others. I find it useful to write my reactions in the margins of the readings. Comments such as “YES!” “Why is the author assuming this about women?” “What!?” “I totally agree/disagree!” and “I don’t understand what the author means here??” are all meaningful and productive reactions. Be sure to expand on these reactions in class. This is not a class in which you can skim the readings. You must not only read but engage and react to the readings. Be sure to set aside ample time each week to do your readings, take notes, react, etc. I have chosen readings carefully and with deep understanding of the busy life of a college student.

Class time
This class may be unique to your college experience thus far as it is primarily discussion based. I will often begin class with clarifying key terms and concepts for the day's readings. We will then transition into small and large group discussions based on the readings. I will often bring in media texts for us to engage with and connect to the class readings. Each of you comes from different backgrounds and experiences. I respect all of your opinions, reactions, and experiences that intersect with media texts; I expect each of you to value and respect each other as well. We all will work together to create a class environment where everyone feels comfortable to express their views even when it is in disagreement with myself or your classmates. I especially encourage you to add to class discussion when you are still working through ideas and/or are puzzled by class content.

Attendance
Attending class on a regular basis is imperative to your learning and success in this class. Because this is not a lecture-based class, it will be very difficult to “catch up” on what you missed when absent. Please contact me as soon as you know you will be missing a class. Being absent for a class does not include the online work you are required to do. Because life happens, I allow you to miss two classes without grade consequence. After that, your final grade will be dropped a ½ grade per additional absence. My hope is that you attend class regularly because you are interested and engaged in the class material and discussion. It is your responsibility to talk with a peer about what you miss during class.

Classroom expectations
No laptops (unless I specifically allow it for class discussion)
No cellphones (let me know if you are expecting an important call)
No talking while others are talking. If you have something to add, please jot it down and add it to discussion when your classmate or I am done talking
All written work must be turned in at the beginning of class.

Office hours
Students often succeed at a greater rate when they visit a teacher’s office hours. You should not feel nervous to visit my office hours. My office is a relaxed environment where we can discuss your papers, go over any questions you have about class content, or to continue class discussion. I enjoy talking with students about their work. Feel free to just pop in or send me an email that you are coming by. I also can meet outside my office hours. You are not required to come to my office hours but I highly encourage it if you are seeking a high grade in this class.

Documentation of sources
Not documenting your sources is plagiarism. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, please come speak with me. To avoid any possibility of plagiarism you must cite all ideas, words, and theories that are not your own. I encourage you to refer to other people's ideas, works, and theories—you just have cite them. Please use MLA, APA, or Chicago documentation styles. Google and www.writing.umn.edu/sws will help you learn how to document your sources using these styles. Any act of plagiarism or other forms of scholarly dishonesty (cheating, making up sources, stealing information from the internet) will result in a failing grade for this class and I will submit a formal report with the Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Late work
I do not accept late work. Exceptions to this rule will be discussed in person on a case by case basis.

Disabilities
Please speak with me as soon as possible about any arrangements and accommodations you need in conjunction with disability services.

Mental Health
Adjusting to the high expectations of academic life can be difficult and hard to handle. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety, and/or depression do not hesitate to contact Boynton to make an appointment with the Mental Health Clinic (612-624-1444). Talking through your problems is an effective way to get through this challenging time in your life. There is no shame or embarrassment in seeking mental health assistance.

II. Assignments (500 points)

1. Blog, blog responses and discussion questions via Moodle (75 points)
Once a week: You will write a blog post, around 500 words, in response to a blog prompt I provide at the beginning of the week. The blog posts are due at 6 p.m. every Friday. Posting earlier is encouraged. You are also required to respond to one of your peers’ blog posts every week. Responses need to go beyond complimenting or agreeing with the blog post. You may do something like: answer a question your peer posed in the post, ask additional questions, or explain your reaction to the post. The responses are due before class every Tuesday. In other words, you must respond to the blog posts that are posted, at the latest, on Fridays by the following Tuesday. You can miss one blog post and one blog response this semester without penalty.
Once a week: You must post one discussion question on our blog that connects to the day’s reading. DQs are due at 6 p.m. the night before class. You can miss posting two discussion questions without penalty. For every blog post, blog response, or DQ you do not post (beyond the freebies), you will lose 10 points from this section.

The blog and DQs are fairly informal assignments so you will be not be graded on spelling or grammar unless it distracts from your intended message. I will grade your blog posts and DQs through a check-plus, check, and check-minus system. A check means that you have put in a good effort to engage with the readings, provided a thoughtful answer to my prompt or your own reactions, and showed a solid comprehension of the day’s readings. A check-plus means you go beyond the standard expectations and provide an answer that adds more of your own analysis or a particularly strong engagement with the readings. A check-minus means you provided some response, but did not respond fully and/or did not demonstrate familiarity with the readings. You may talk to me during office hours about your progress with the blog and DQs.

2. Short papers (200 points, 50 per paper)
After each section, you will hand in a 3-4 page analysis paper that applies the concepts from that section to a media example. You are required to write four section papers. Additional details of what is expected in the section analysis will be given out and discussed in class at the beginning of each section.

3. Final paper (125 points)
You will write a 5-7 page paper analyzing a media object/text of your choice. You will work with a small writing workshop group to talk in-depth about your paper. Details will be discussed in class.

4. Class participation (100 points)
This class will be more fun, interesting, and fulfilling for all of us if everyone participates. Class participation is a major grading factor in this class. Strong participation means contributing to group discussion frequently, usually a few times a class period. Feel free to check in with me about your participation grade. Please check in with me if you have special difficulties with participation.

Grade breakdown (percentage of points earned):
A  93-100    C+ 78-79
A- 90-92    C  73-77
B+ 88-89    C- 70-72
B 83-87    D 60-69
B- 80-82    F Below 60

III. Reading and Assignment Schedule (subject to change)
Section One: Theories and frameworks
Sept 6  Introduction to course

Sept 8  Media Literacy and Political Economy
Hobbs, “Seven Great Debates in the Media Literacy Movement”
Meehan, “‘Holy Commodity Fetish, Batman!’: The Political Economy of a Commercial Intertext”

Sept 13 Hegemony and ideology
Lull, “Hegemony”
Hall, “The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media”

Sept 15 Semiotics
Hall, “Encoding/Decoding”
Screening: Dreamworlds 3

**Section One paper due by beginning of class on Sept 20!**

Section Two: Representations, socially constructed identities
Sept 20  Feminism
Damen, “Feminism, the Mainstream Media, and Pop Culture”
Mulvey, “Visual pleasure and narrative cinema”
Azikwe, “More Than Baby Mamas: Black Mothers and Hip-Hop Feminism”
Listening session: Selections from The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill, Beyonce’s “Who Rule the World (Girls)”

Sept 22  Post-feminism
Douglas, “Girls Gone Anti-Feminist.”
Levy. “Raunch Culture.”

Sept 27 Masculinity
Katz, “Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity”
Smith, “Critiquing Reality-Based Televisual Black Fatherhood”
Screening: Tough Guise and/or Run’s House

Sept 29 Class
Butsch, “Ralph, Fred, Archie and Homer: Why Television Keeps Re-creating the White Male Working-Class Buffoon”
Bettie, “Class Dismissed? Roseanne and the Changing Face of Working-Class Iconography”
Screening: Roseanne

Oct 4 Race and ethnicity
Ono and Pham, “Problematic Representations of Asian American Gender and Sexuality”
Rose, “There are Bitches and Hoes”

Oct 6 Race and ethnicity
Esposito, “What Does Race Have to do With Ugly Betty?: An Analysis of Privilege and Postracial (?) Representations on a Television Sitcom?”

**Lim, “Media Race Mess: Alicia Keys and Unthinkable Interracial Dating” (Melody will post link to this reading on the class blog)**

**Section Two paper due by beginning of class on Oct 11**

**Section Three: Representations, socially constructed lives & behaviors**

Oct 11 Sexual and physical violence
Cuklanz & Moorti, “Televison’s ‘New’ Feminism: Prime-Time Representations of Women and Victimization”
Miranda, “Love the Way You Lie: Pop culture, Race and Domestic Violence”
Screening: Rihanna’s “Man Down” and “Love the Way You Lie”

Oct 13 Disability
Riley, “Heroes of Assimilation: How the Media Transform Disability”
Screening: Friday Night Lights

Oct 18 Queer lives
Padva, “Educating The Simpsons: Teaching Queer Representations in Contemporary Visual Media”
Pratt, “‘This Is the Way We Live...and Love!’: Feeding on and Still Hungering for Lesbian Representation in The L Word”

**Davies, “More than just ‘Lip Service’?: Stereotypes in lesbian focused drama” (Melody will post a link to this reading on the blog)**

Oct 20 Queer lives
Halberstam, “The Transgender Look”
Screening: The Crying Game

**Section Three paper due by beginning of class on Oct 25**

**Section Four: Media formats**

Oct 25 Pornography
Dworkin, Selections from Pornography: Men Possessing Women
McElroy, Selections from XXX: A Woman’s Right to Pornography

Oct 27 Pornification
Caputi, “The Pornography of Everyday Life”
**Kipnis, O'Rourke, and Shallit. “Pornified and Female Chauvinist Pigs: What's Caused the Sexualization of Our Culture.” (Melody will post link to reading on the class blog)

Nov 1 Advertising
Williamson, Selections from Decoding Advertisements

Nov 3 Advertising
Dines and Humez, “Advertising and Consumer Culture”
Jhally, “Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture”
Screening: Killing Us Softly 4

Nov 8 Sports
McKay and Johnson, “Pornographic Eroticism and Sexual Grotesquerie in Representations of African American Sportswomen”

**Discuss final paper (DRAFT DUE ON DEC 1)

Nov 10 Sports
Oates, “The Erotic Gaze in the NFL Draft”
Screening: The NFL Draft

Nov 15 Journalism
Herman and Chompsky, “The Propaganda Model”

Nov 17 The future of journalism
Johnson, "Old Growth Media and the Future of News."
**Starr, "Goodbye to the Age of Newspapers (Hello to a New Age of Corruption)" (Melody will post a link to this reading on the class blog)

**Section Four papers due by beginning of class on Nov 22

Section Five: New Media and Media Activism

Nov 22 Culture Jamming
Warner, “Political Culture Jamming: The Dissident Humor of The Daily Show With Jon Stewart”
Klein, “Culture Jamming: Ads Under Attack”

Nov 24 NO CLASS
Happy Buy Nothing Day!

Nov 29 Video gaming
Shaw, “Do you identify as a gamer? Gender, race, sexuality and gamer identity”

Dec 1 WORKSHOP DAY//final paper DRAFT due
Dec 6 Convergence Culture and Branding
Jenkins, “Buying into American Idol”

Dec 8 Fan culture
Radway, “Women Read the Romance: The Interaction of Text and Context”
Ng, “Reading the Romance of Fan Cultural Production: Music Videos of a Television Lesbian Couple”

Dec 13 The future
Reading TBA, as determined by class.

**Section five papers are due by Dec 15

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE DEC 19 BY 10 A.M. IN MY MAILBOX IN FORD 250. Include a stamped and addressed envelope if you would like me to send you feedback.