

Media Images and Labor

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Saturday, 1:00 to 3:55 pm, LEC Auditorium 137

Instructor: Nat T. Bender
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By appointment, if before or after class does not work well

Media images of work, workers and workers' organizations in news and popular media.

In this class students will learn to “read” individual media tracts in print and electronic communication to critically review constructed meaning and analyze intended impact.

Specific Learning objectives:

By the end of the course, students will demonstrate a functional understanding of critical theory of propaganda in mass media and how that influences how media frame workers; particularly those who exercise collective action in labor unions or social movements.

Questions explored will be:

- How does the structure of corporate media organizations, particularly media consolidation, impact the content and scope of issues discussed?
- What is the political economy of news and entertainment media and how does that influence the creation of content and meaning?
- What assumptions must media workers internalize to succeed commercially and how do those assumptions impact their coverage, questions, critique and analysis of news events or direction of creative projects?

Student learning will be assessed primarily by an exam covering readings, lectures, and group exercises.

There are five sessions for this class and it is imperative that you attend all five sessions. If you have a serious emergency such as an automobile accident or a hospitalization, you will need to bring documentation of that emergency, and then undertake extra credit work.

Grading will be based on participation and the final exam. Specifically:

- 12 points. Attendance and participation in group exercises done in class; demonstrated respect for others is essential – that is, participation includes listening skills as well as individual contribution to the exercises.

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- 13 points. Knowledge of readings and course concepts demonstrated through class discussion, group leadership, and contributions made in group exercises.
- 25 points. One homework assigned class two, due class four, and
- 50 percent. Final exam on May 4.

There also will be an opportunity for extra credit. (Up to 5 points additional credit).

Expected behavior: Please turn off cell-phones and personal computers. Please arrive on time and stay until the class ends.

Session I: April 6, 2013

A Propaganda Model (introduction to Chomsky and Herman)

First half of *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*. Director Robert Greenwald. Brave New Films.

Read for Session II (Reading is available on Sakai)

Edward S. Herman, Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Chapter 1. A Propaganda Model.

Bruno. *Evidence of Bias in the Chicago Tribune Coverage of Organized Labor. A Quantitative Study from 1991 to 2001*. *Labor Studies Journal*. Vol. 34. No. 3. Sept, 2009.

Session II: April 13, 2013

Critical practice: Content analysis of print articles

(Discuss Bruno methodology; break into groups to practice then read out.)

Assignment distributed.

Watch second half of *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*. Director Robert Greenwald. Brave New Films.

Read for Session III (Reading is available on Sakai):

Kumar, *Outside the Box*. Chapter 3. Pages 59-88. "Us" and "Them": The Nationalist Narrative in Network Television News.

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Nichols, *Uprising: How Wisconsin Renewed the Politics of Protest from Madison to Wall Street*. Chapter 5. Pages 91-118. *The Next Media System*.

Session III: April 20, 2013

Exploring bias in Television News

Watch news and analyze

Group Exercise

Reading for Session IV (Reading is available on Sakai):

Martin, *Framed*. Chapter 1. How Labor Gets Framed. Pages 1-20.

Session IV: April 27, 2013

Five Dominant Frames of Labor News

Read for Session V (Reading is available on Sakai):

Park, Wright. *Giving Labor the Business? Changes in Business and Labor Reporting from 1980 to 2000*. *Labor Studies Journal*. Vol 32. No. 1. March 2007.

Puette, *Through Jaundiced Eyes. How the Media View Organized Labor*. Chapter 5. *Cartoons: Drawn and Quartered*. Pages 74-99.

Session V: May 4, 2013

Lecture/discussion on readings:

How does Park, Wright relate to Chomsky and Herman? Martin?

Group exercise: Analyze cartoons.

Exam

This short answer/objective exam covers both what is discussed in class and what is in the reading, whether or not it is discussed in class.