

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Department of Political Science

W3921x (Section 7): MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND VIOLENCE (Fall 2007)

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Office Hours:

Course Description: The seminar will examine how the mass media portray various forms of violence (crime, terrorism, counterterrorism, war, genocide, etc.) and how perpetrators, victims, and other actors utilize and exploit mass communication and media to further their objectives.

Course Requirements: Attendance at all sessions is required except for excused absences on religious holidays for observant students. If a student misses more than two classes without proof of sickness or other exceptional reasons, the final grade will be lowered by ½ point for each missed class; if a student misses five or more sessions without proof of serious sickness, he/she will fail the class.

Students must read the assigned material in preparation for each session and participate in class discussions. To make sure that everyone is well prepared to participate in class discussions, each student will compile for each seminar meeting a short list (one page or less) of questions, issues, observations concerning the assigned readings.

Every student is required to write a research paper (about 25 type-written, double-spaced pages) that examines one particular aspect of media/communication and violence (or non-violent movements and the media). We will discuss topics in class. The deadline for handing in a proposal with a list of sources is October 10th, the complete term paper is due in our last class session. Grades will be based on class participation and short presentation of research findings (one third of the final grade) and the final paper (two thirds).

Topics and Mandatory Readings:

Session 1 **Introduction: Course Topic, Format, Requirements**
(Sept. 5)

Why is there a need to examine violence in the context of media and communication? What media, what communication means figure prominently into what forms of violence?

Session 2: **“Mass-Media Violence” in Entertainment and Infotainment**
(Sept.12)

Readings:

Sissela Bok, *Mayhem: Violence as public entertainment*. Reading, MA: Perseus Books, 1998.

Federal Trade Commission’s Report, Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children” at <http://www.ftc.gov/reports/violence/070412MarketingViolentEChildren.pdf>

Session 3: **Crime Reporting and Its Effect on Public Fears**
(Sept. 19)

Readings:

James T. Hamilton, Channeling Violence: The Economic Market for Violent Television Programming, chapters chapter 1,2,3 and 7.

Daniel Romer, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, and Sean Aday, “Television News and the Cultivation of Fear of Crime.” Journal of Communication 53(1) (March 2003): 88-104.

Dennis T. Lowry, Tarn Ching Josephine Nio, and Dennit W. Leitner, “Setting the Public Fear Agenda.” Journal of Communication 53(1) (March 2003): 61-73.

Session 4: **Stereotyping Ethnic/Racial Groups as Criminals/Terrorists**
(Sept. 26)

Readings:

Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, The Black Image in the White Mind, chapters 4-6, 9-12.

Jessica M. Fishman and Carolyn Marvin, “Portrayal of Violence and Group Difference in Newspaper Photographs.” Journal of Communication 53(1) March 2003): 32-44.

Derek H. Alterman, “TV News Hyper-Coverage and the Representation of Place: Observation on the O.J. Simpson Case.” Geografiska Annaler. Series B, 79(2) (1979): 83-95.

Brigitte L. Nacos and Oscar Torres-Reyna. Fueling Our Fears: Stereotyping News Coverage and Public Opinion of Muslim Americans, chapters 1-3.

Session 5: **Terrorism and Communication: Why Terrorists Need Publicity/ Propaganda**
(Oct. 3)

Readings:

Brigitte L. Nacos, Mass-Mediated Terrorism, Second Edition, chapters 1,3.

Anthony Pratkanis and Elliott Aronson. The Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion. New York: W.E. Freeman, 1992, pp. 1-61, 161-7.

Mia Bloom, Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, chapter 4. (Question: Is there an Outbidding-publicity connection?)

Session 6: **Spectacular Terrorist Strikes as Media Events**
(Oct. 10)

Readings:

Nacos, Mass-Mediated Terrorism, Second Edition, chapter 2.

Elihu Katz and Tamar Liebes, “‘No More Peace!’: How Disaster, Terror And War Have Upstaged Media Events.” International Journal of Communication 1 (2007): 157-166.

Elisabeth Anker, “Villains, Victims, and Heroes: Melodrama, Media, and September 11.” Journal of Communication 55(3) (March 2005): 22-37.

Shanto Iyengar, Is Anyone Responsible?, chapters 1-4, 9, Conclusion

Session 7: **Terrorists, Hate Groups, and the Internet**
(Oct. 17)

Readings:

Gabriel Weimann. Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges, chapters 2, 3, 4.

Nacos, Mass-Mediated Terrorism, 2, Edition, chapter 4.

Session 8: **Public Attitudes and the Terrorism Threat**
(Oct. 24)

Readings:

Leoni Huddy et al. "Fear and Terrorism: Psychological Reactions to 9/11." In Pippa Norris, Montague Kern and Marion Just. Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government, and the Public, pp.256-278.

Nacos, Mass-Mediated Terrorism, Second Edition, Chapter 6.

Nacos and Torres-Reyna, chapter 4, 6.

Session 9: **Watchdog Press, Values, and Over-Reactions to Terrorist Strikes**
(Oct. 31)

Readings:

W. Lance Bennett, Regina G. Lawrence, and Steven Livingston. When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina, Chapters 3, 4., 5.

Brigitte L. Nacos and Oscar Torres-Reyna. Fueling Our Fears: Stereotyping News Coverage and Public Opinion of Muslim Americans, chapter 5.

Session 10: **Media and Non-Violent Political Movements:
The Case of the Civil Rights Movement**
(Nov.7)

Reading:

Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation, chapters

Session 11: **The Press and War/Major Foreign Crisis**
(Nov. 14)

Readings:

MacArthur, John R. Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the [first] Gulf War, chapters 2, 4, and 5

Mermin, Jonathan. Debating War and Peace: Media Coverage of U.S. Intervention in the Post-Vietnam Era, chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Richard A. Brody. Assessing the President: The Media, Elite Opinion, and Public Support, chapter 3.

Session 12: **The Media and Military Actions in Response to Terrorism/**
(Nov. 21) **The Post-9/11 “War on Terrorism”**

Readings:

W. Lance Bennett, Regina G. Lawrence, and Steven Livingston. When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina, Introduction and chapters 1 and 2.

Nacos, Mass-Mediated Terrorism, chapter 5.

Cynthia Boaz, “War and Foreign Policy Framing in International Media.” Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice 17 (2005): 349-356.

Michael M. Haigh et al., “A Comparison of Embedded and Nonembedded Print Coverage of the U.S. Invasion and Occupation of Iraq.” Press/Politics 11(2) (2006): 139-153.

Ingrid A Lehmann, “Exploring the Transatlantic Media Divide over Iraq.” Press/Politics 10(1) (2005): 63-89.

Session 13: **Peace-Keeping and Humanitarian Interventions**
(Nov. 28)

Readings:

Warren B. Strobel, Late-Breaking Foreign Policy, chapters 3, 4, and 5

Moeller, Susan D., “‘Regarding the Pain of Others’: Media, Bias and the Coverage of International Disasters.” Journal of International Affairs 59 (2) (Spring/Summer 2006): 173-196.

Dauber, Cori E., “The Shots Seen ‘Round the World: The Impact of the Images of Mogadishu on American Military Operations.” Rhetoric & Public Affairs 4(4) (Nov. 2001): 653-687

Session 14: **Last Class: Summaries of Students’ Research Findings**
(Dec. 5)

Research Papers are due at the beginning of today’s class meeting

The following books are available in the Columbia Bookstore and suggested for purchase because the entire books or most chapters are required readings:

W. Lance Bennett, Regina G. Lawrence, and Steven Livingston. When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina. New York: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Sissela Bok, *Mayhem: Violence as public entertainment*. Reading, MA: Perseus Books, 1998 (paperback).

Entman Robert M. and Andrew Rojecki, The Black Image in the White Mind. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000 (paperback).

Brigitte L. Nacos. Mass-Mediated Terrorism: The Centrality of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism. Second Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007 (paperback).

Massing, Michael. Now They Tell Us: The American Press and Iraq. New York: New York Review Books, 2004 (paperback).

The following books are on reserve at Butler Library:

Bloom, Mia. Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

Bok, Sissela, Mayhem: Violence as public entertainment. Reading, MA: Perseus Books, 1998.

Brody, Richard A. Assessing the President: The Media, Elite Opinion, and Public Support. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991.

Bennett, W. Lance, Regina G. Lawrence, and Steven Livingston. When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina. New York: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Entman, Robert M. and Andrew Rojecki, The Black Image in the White Mind. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Hamilton, James T. Channeling Violence: The Economic Market for Violent Television Programming. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Iyengar, Shanto. Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

MacArthur, John R. Second Front: Censorship and Propaganda in the [first] Gulf War. Berkeley, CA: University of Berkeley Press, 1993.

Massing, Michael. Now They Tell Us: The American Press and Iraq. New York: New York Review Books, 2004.

Mermin, Jonathan. Debating War and Peace: Media Coverage of U.S. Intervention in the Post-Vietnam Era. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Nacos, Brigitte L. Mass-Mediated Terrorism: The Centrality of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism, Second Edition. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

Nacos, Brigitte L. and Oscar Torres-Reyna. Fueling Our Fears: Stereotyping, News Coverage and Public Opinion of Muslim Americans. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

Norris, Pippa, Montague Kern and Marion Just. Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government, and the Public. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Pratkanis, Anthony and Elliott Aronson. The Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion. New York: W.E. Freeman, 1992.

Roberts, Gene and Hank Klibanoff, The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation,

Strobel, Warren. Late-Breaking Foreign News: The News Media's Influence on Peace Operations. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997.

Weimann, Gabriel. Terror on the Internet: The New Arena, the New Challenges. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006.

The following articles can be accessed electronically:

Anker, Elisabeth, "Villains, Victims, and Heroes: Melodrama, Media, and September 11." Journal of Communication 55(3) (March 2005): 22-37.

Alterman, Derek H. "TV News Hyper-Coverage and the Representation of Place: Observation on the O.J. Simpson Case." Geografiska Annaler. Series B, 79(2) (1979): 83-95.

Boaz, Cynthia, "War and Foreign Policy Framing in International Media." Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice 17 (2005): 349-356.

Dauber, Cori E., "The Shots Seen 'Round the World: The Impact of the Images of Mogadishu on American Military Operations." Rhetoric & Public Affairs 4(4) (Nov. 2001): 653-687.

Chiricos, Ted, Sarah Eschholz and Marc Gertz, "Crime, News and Fear of Crime: Toward an Identification of Audience Effects." Social Problems 44(3), (August 1997):342-357.

Fishman, Jessica M. and Carolyn Marvin, "Portrayal of Violence and Group Difference in Newspaper Photographs." Journal of Communication 53(1) March 2003): 32-44.

Gerbner, George and L. Gross. "Living with television: The violence profile." Journal of Communication 26(2) (1976): 173-99.

Haigh, Michel M. at al., "A Comparison of Embedded and Nonembedded Print Coverage of the U.S. Invasion and Occupation of Iraq." Press/Politics 11(2) (2006): 139-153.

Katz, Elihu and Tamar Liebes, "'No More Peace!': How Disaster, Terror and War Have Upstaged Media Events." International Journal of Communication 1 (2007): 157-166.

Kolker, Robert, "The Grief Police." New York Magazine, November 28, 2005: 46-54.

Lehman, Ingrid A., "Exploring the Transatlantic Media Divide over Iraq." Press/Politics 10(1) (2005): 63-89.

Lowry, Dennis T., Tarn Ching Josephine Nio, and Dennis W. Leitner, "Setting the Public Fear Agenda." Journal of Communication 53(1) (March 2003): 61-73.

Roemer, Daniel, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, and Sean Aday, "Television News and the Cultivation of Fear of Crime." Journal of Communication 53(1) (March 2003): 88-104.

Moeller, Susan D., "Regarding the Pain of Others': Media, Bias and the Coverage of International Disasters." Journal of International Affairs 59 (2) (Spring/Summer 2006): 173-196.

Smith, Stacy L, Amy I. Nathanson, and Barbara J. Wilson, "Prime-Time Television: Assessing Violence During the Most Popular Viewing Hours." Journal of Communication 52(1) (March 2002): 84-111.