

Communication 4401: Mass Communication and Youth
Spring 2015

Professor	
<p style="text-align: center;">Dr. Amy Nathanson 3142a Derby Hall nathanson.7@osu.edu Office phone: 247.7952 Office Hours: Fri 9:30-11:20 a.m.</p>	

Meeting Times and Location

MWF 11:30 – 12:25 p.m., Journalism 239

Required Reading

Strasburger, V. C., Wilson, B. J., & Jordan, A. B. (2013). *Children, Adolescents, and the Media* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. A copy of this book will be on reserve at the Main Library. In addition, there are three readings available on Carmen.

Course Description

This course examines the uses and effects of mass communication among children and adolescents. By taking a developmental perspective, we will consider how youngsters at different stages of cognitive development watch, understand, and respond to media content. The first part of the course will focus on children's uses (including the role of media in the development and socialization of self) and processing of media (including patterns of attention and comprehension). The second part of the course will review the effects of various types of content (e.g., advertising, stereotypes, violence, health messages, educational programming, frightening content). Students will be encouraged to consider the effects of mass media in light of the research on children's uses and processing of media. During the last part of the course, we will consider the role of interventions (e.g., media literacy, ratings) in preventing media-related outcomes that are harmful and promoting those which are positive.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to understand the following:

- how children represent a unique audience of the mass media that deserves careful attention and consideration.
- how theories of cognitive development and mass communication inform our understanding of children's uses of and responses to the mass media.
- the challenges associated with conducting mass communication research among children.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to do the following:

- critically evaluate social scientific research on mass communication and children.
- identify the potentially harmful aspects of specific media content
- use theory and research to propose interventions that are practical and effective.

Course Requirements

Lecture and Discussion: Questions and discussion are encouraged during class. The lectures are designed to highlight, explain, update, and enhance material in the text as well as cover issues that the readings do not. I encourage you to participate by asking questions, answering questions, and offering comments. If you miss a class, be prepared to get the missed material from a classmate. The professor will not meet with you to go over missed material.

In-Class Assignments: You will regularly be asked to complete in-class assignments and/or quizzes. Students can expect roughly 10-15 of these assignments throughout the semester, though you will not know in advance which days these will occur. Because many of these assignments involve your participation in some discussion, group, or activity these assignments **cannot be made up outside of class**. That is, you must be in class in order to earn these points. However, I will drop your three lowest scores providing you some cushion should you need to miss a class on a day that an in-class assignment is given.

Exams: There will three exams based on material covered in class and in the assigned readings. Throughout the semester, newer material will build on older material. Thus, each exam is inherently cumulative. Both lecture material and reading assignments will be tested. The exams may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions dealing with lecture content and the readings.

Grading

Your grade in this course will be determined according to your performance on the following.

Exam 1	30%
Exam 2	30%
Exam 3	30%
<u>In-class assignments</u>	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL	100 %

The grading scale for this course will follow the standard OSU grading scheme, which is:

A = 93-100%	C = 73-76%
A- = 90-92%	C- = 70-72%
B+ = 87-89%	D+ = 67-69%
B = 83-86%	D = 60-66%
B- = 80-82%	E = 0-59%
C+ = 77-79%	

Course Policies

Exams: All exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. No early or late exams are allowed except in the case of an extreme emergency. In the rare event that an emergency arises, it is your responsibility to: 1) inform the professor prior to the scheduled exam time, and 2) provide the professor with written documentation of the emergency (e.g., medical note from a certified physician). Such documentation must be presented before the missed exam whenever possible (and by the next class period when this is not possible). Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a different ratio than the original.

Respect for Fellow Students and Professor: Please turn off phone during class. If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (whether it is the professor or another student). During class, avoid reading newspapers, sending text messages/email, updating your Facebook page, sleeping, talking while others are talking, etc. ***Students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors during class will be asked to leave.***

Graduating Seniors: Graduating seniors (and other students) who “need” this course to graduate (or to fulfill some requirement) should work especially hard to ensure that they will pass this class. There will NOT be opportunities for students to re-take exams or re-complete assignments in order to raise their grade. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that he or she receives a passing final grade by working diligently and responsibly throughout the semester. Exceptions will NOT be made.

Academic Integrity

All students at the Ohio State University are bound by the code of student conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp). Any evidence of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct in accordance with the Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct and the rules of faculty governance. Academic misconduct is any activity that compromises the academic integrity of the institution or subverts the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Violation of course rules as contained in the course syllabus or other information provided to the student; violation of program regulations as established by departmental committees and made available to students;
2. Knowingly providing or receiving information during examinations such as course examinations and candidacy examinations; or the possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during those examinations;
3. Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, in scholarship or on a course assignment;
4. Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas;
5. Submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement;
6. Falsification, fabrication, or dishonesty in creating or reporting laboratory results, research results, and/or any other assignments;
7. Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of a substitute for a student in the taking of examinations;
8. Alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit;
9. Alteration of academically-related university forms or records, or unauthorized use of those forms or records; and
10. Engaging in activities that unfairly place other students at a disadvantage, such as taking, hiding or altering resource material, or manipulating a grading system.

Accommodations

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request. Students with disabilities are responsible for making their needs known to the instructor and seeking available assistance in a timely manner. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the office for disability services at 292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Lecture Schedule and Readings

Course schedule is subject to change. In such a case, announcements will be made in class.

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan 12-Jan 16	Introduction; Issues in studying children and the media
		<u>Read: pp. 1-10</u>
2	Jan 21-Jan-23	Issues in studying children and the media; Media habits
		<u>Read: "Media and Youth" article on Carmen; No class on Jan 19 for MLK day</u>
3	Jan 26-Jan30	Media habits of children and adolescents
		<u>Read: Chapter 9 & "Always connected..." article by Gutnick et al. (2011) on Carmen</u>
4	Feb 2-Feb 6	Media & cognitive development
		<u>Read: pp. 11-46 & "The immediate impact..." article by Lillard & Peterson (2011) on Carmen</u>

Week	Date	Topic
5	Feb 9-Feb 13	Media & cognitive development
<u>Read: "The effects of fast-paced cartoon" article by Christakis (2011) on Carmen; EXAM 1 on Friday, Feb 13</u>		
6	Feb 16-Feb 20	Media attention & comprehension
<u>Read: "The three-legged dog..." article by Mares & Acosta on Carmen</u>		
7	Feb 23-Feb 27	Media attention & comprehension; Media violence
<u>Read: Chapter 4 & "Media and young children's learning" article by Kirkorian et al. on Carmen</u>		
8	Mar 2-Mar 6	Media violence
<u>Read: Chapter 10 & "Parental desensitization..." article by Romer et al. (2014) on Carmen</u>		
9	Mar 9-Mar 13	Frightening content
<u>Read: "Tales from the screen..." article by Harrison & Cantor (1999) on Carmen; EXAM 2 on Friday, Mar 13</u>		
10	Mar 16-Mar 20	Spring Break
11	Mar 23-Mar 27	Advertising & Stereotypes
<u>Read: Chapters 2 & 5</u>		
12	Mar 30-Apr 3	Health & media
<u>Read: Chapters 6 & 7</u>		
13	Apr 6-Apr 10	Educational & prosocial media
<u>Read: Chapter 3 & "Learning at home..." article by Rideout (2014) on Carmen</u>		

Week	Date	Topic
14	Apr 13-Apr 17	The Internet/ Media literacy
<u>Read: Chapters 8 & 12</u>		
15	Apr 20-Apr 24	Industry & parent interventions
<u>Read: Chapters 11 & 13</u>		
16	Apr 27	Catch up & review
<u>Read: "Media Effects: Magnitude, Risk, & Media Literacy" article on Carmen</u>		

Exam 3: Friday, May 1 at 12:00 p.m.