

**Spring 2017**  
**Communication 4401**  
**Mass Communication and Youth**

**Professor**

Dr. Emily Moyer-Gusé  
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**Meeting Times and Locations**

W/F 11:30—1:35 Journalism Bldg. 360

**Required Readings**

Strasburger, V. C., Wilson, B. J., & Jordan, A. B. (2014). *Children, Adolescents, and the Media* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

\*Additional required readings posted on the course website.

**Course Description**

This course will provide students with an understanding of how children and adolescents interact with, interpret, and are affected by the media. We will take a developmental perspective on these issues, meaning we will focus on how young children, older children, and adolescents interpret and respond to media content differently. Major topics will include the effects of media violence, advertising, sexual content, educational, and prosocial messages. In addition, we will examine and evaluate strategies to reduce harmful media effects and enhance positive media effects on young people.

**Course Format**

Given that this is an upper level course, much of our class time will be dedicated to collective discussion. Participating in a discussion and analysis of the material enhances your understanding and helps you sharpen your critical thinking. This means that you should master the reading assignments and come to class prepared with questions, criticisms, and comments. In class, I will provide some background information and clarify portions of the readings when needed. However, I will rely on your comments and questions to guide our class discussions. As such, you should read the material with an eye for generating questions and discussion in class.

**Office Hours and Email**

Email is the quickest and easiest way to obtain answers to brief questions of clarification. Please do not use email for questions that can be answered by reviewing the syllabus or other official course documents. If you have a question that cannot be answered by looking at the course syllabus or other

documents on the course website, then asking me via email is appropriate. You can generally expect a response to these brief email questions or clarifications within 24 hours. If you have more involved questions, these should be reserved for a one-on-one session during office hours. If you ask a question via email that I cannot adequately answer in that format, I will remind you that you would be better served by coming to see me during office hours.

## Course Requirements

Attendance: Consistent class attendance is expected and will account for 2% of your grade in the course. I will automatically “excuse” one absence for each student.

Participation: Class participation is essential in this class. Each person's engagement sets a tone that affects the rest of the class. To incentivize this essential component of the class, **12 percent** of your course grade will be based on regular and thoughtful participation in discussion. It is not enough for you to merely attend class or to do the readings. Rather, you must actively discuss the readings and engage in discussion with other students. You should come to class ready to discuss the readings and raise questions about them. To this end, each student will contribute to the development of a classroom environment where ideas are examined from various perspectives.

Readings: The required readings for this class are designed to be a starting point for our class discussions and activities. **Reading prior to our class meetings is required.**

Each student will be responsible for turning in a reading response during **two** of our class meetings. You will sign up for the dates on which you plan to do this. The reading response should be 1-2 typed pages and must include two things.

1. Create a list of **at least four discussion questions** raised by that day's assigned readings. You will be asked to share these questions in class in order to facilitate our group discussion.

These questions *may* be related to:

- Portions of the readings you disagree with
- Broader issues raised by the readings
- Empirical and/or theoretical questions raised by the readings
- How the readings relate to or contradict previous readings
- Practical implications of the reading

2. Provide a brief, but thoughtful, reaction to the readings. In your reaction, do not spend time summarizing the readings, but rather get right to your evaluations, comments, and critique.

To get you started, some of the things you may want to address may include:

- What is the issue of most concern to the author?
- What are the main findings of the study or what are the main points made by the author and what is the most critical evidence presented by the author in support of these points?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author's work (credibility of the arguments; appropriateness of the research design, measures; validity of the

interpretations or conclusions made)? Are there any flaws or inconsistencies in the studies and/or arguments being made?

- How does this theory/research overlap and diverge from others we have discussed (or those we haven't discussed)?
- Are additional questions raised by the theory and/or research results?
- Are you convinced? Or, is something missing?
- What are the implications (practical or theoretical) of the conclusions reached by the authors?
- What future research is needed in this area?

Class Assignments: You will regularly be asked to complete assignments that we will use to enhance class time. Some assignments will be carried out individually while others will be completed in a group. Some of these assignments will be finished entirely in class, while most will require you to do some writing, researching, and/or analysis online or otherwise outside of class. Each assignment has a due date listed on the syllabus and/or course website. Some assignments—those that take place during our class meeting—cannot be made up if you are not in attendance that day.

Exams: There will be two exams based on the material covered in class and in the assigned readings. Throughout the semester, newer material will build on older material. Thus, the exams are inherently cumulative. For example, early in the semester we will examine developmental theory and how it affects children's interpretation of media messages. This developmental perspective will remain relevant and important later in the quarter when we study specific media topics and their effects on children and adolescents.

Content Pitch: This assignment is designed to evaluate how well you can integrate developmental issues into media content made for individuals in a particular developmental "stage." In this project you will be asked to identify and execute an important "next step" needed in one of the topic areas covered in class. I am flexible regarding the format you use to turn in this project, but it must be in a format that is stable (i.e., not a live performance that is not recorded). You can use PowerPoint, poster, script, video, website, phone app, etc. Specifics of this assignment are posted on the course website but, in short, you will be asked to identify a need that children/adolescents at a particular developmental level have that your content will aim to fulfill. You will work with one or two other students and, together with your group, you will develop a product to fill this need based upon course readings and relevant developmental theory. You will have an opportunity to present your project to the class during our last week of class.

## **Grading**

There will NOT be opportunities for any student to re-take exams, re-complete assignments, or complete additional work in order to raise his/her grade outside what is laid out in this syllabus.

**Providing extra assignments for one student or “bumping up” a grade for one student invalidates the standards applied to the class and is unfair to every student.** For this reason, please do not ask me to reconsider your grade when the semester is over unless there has been an error in how it was calculated.

Your grade in this course is based upon the following:

Exams	36%
Class Assignments	30%
Final Project & Presentation (Content Pitch)	20%
Class Participation	12%
Attendance	2%

### **Course Policies**

**Exams:** Exams are to be taken in class on the designated exam dates. No early or late exams will be given except in the case of an illness or other emergency. In the rare event that an illness or 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 physician). Please note that make-up exams may be of a different format or cover course content in a different ratio than the original.

**Deadlines:** I expect that all work will be turned in on time. Late work may be accepted (e.g., unless class participation was a relevant part of the assignment), however late assignments are marked down 10% per day.

**Use of Email and Canvas:** You are responsible for all information sent to you via your OSU email account and/or posted on the Canvas Website. Therefore, it is important for you to check your OSU email account regularly and be sure to purge your account of unneeded email so that new messages can get through. Similarly, check the Canvas website regularly for any updates or announcements.

**Respect for Fellow Students and Professor:** Please turn off phones during class. If you choose to come to class, you should give your full attention to any person who is speaking (e.g., the professor, TA, or another student). During class, avoid reading other material, sending text messages/email, sleeping, browsing the Internet, working on other class projects, talking while others are talking, etc. ***Students engaging in these or other disruptive behaviors during class will be asked to leave.***

**Phone/Tablet/Laptop Policy:** I do not permit the use of laptops, tablets, phones, or other similar devices in class as they introduce a variety of potential disruptions. In addition to this, research indicates that taking notes with a pen and paper is more conducive to learning and results in more

successful exam performance. If you bring a laptop, tablet, or phone with you please keep it powered off, closed, and put away during class. Please excuse yourself from class if you need to attend to your phone for any reason. If a student disrupts the class and/or violates the technology policy, I will ask the student to stop whatever action they are engaging in or to leave the classroom. Any disruption will result in a 2 percentage point deduction (of total grade). In the event of a point deduction, students will receive written correspondence that documents the event and the penalty.

**School of Communication Diversity Statement:** The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

### **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](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**

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format and explore possible accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for the accommodation and developing accommodation strategies. The office can be contacted at 614-292-3307 and is located in room 150 Pomerene Hall.

### Lecture Schedule & Readings\*

Date		Topic	Important Info
W	1/11	Introduction: Course Overview & Orientation Youth Media Habits & Industry	
F	1/13	Discuss Media Diary; Doing Research	
Online #1		Media Diary	Due Friday 1/13
W	1/18	Developmental Theory	
F	1/20	Violence and Fear	
Online #2		Developmental Media Analysis	Due Monday 1/23
W	1/25	Advertising and Industry regulation	
F	1/27	Review and Exam #1	
Online #3		Advertising comprehension analysis; Captive Audience	Due Monday 1/30
W	2/1	Media and stereotypes	
F	2/3	Media and stereotypes; Begin educational media	
Online #4		Mickey Mouse Monopoly	Due Monday 2/6
W	2/8	Educational/prosocial media	
F	2/10	Sex & Relationships	
Online #5		Educational media analysis	Due Monday 2/13

W	2/15	Food & Body	
F	2/17	Parents/Ratings/Media literacy	
Online #6		Food marketing Ted Talk	Due Monday 2/20
W	2/22	Student Presentations	
F	2/24	Final Exam	
Online #7		Media Protective Strategy Analysis	Due Friday 2/24

\*Course Schedule subject to change. Please see posted version on Canvas for most up-to-date information. Announcements will be made in class regarding any changes.

### Required Readings

#### Friday 1/13 (Discuss Media Diary; Doing research and methods assignment)

Textbook: Chapter 1--*Children and Adolescents: Unique Audiences* (p. 1-10)

Sparks, G. G. (2002). Scientific methods in media effects research. In, *Media effects research: A basic overview* (pp. 19-38). Thompson Learning Inc.

#### Wednesday 1/18 (Developmental theory—lead into developmental media analysis online)

Textbook: Chapter 1—*Children and Adolescents: Unique Audiences* (p. 11-36)

Scheibe, C. (2007). Piaget and power rangers: What can theories of developmental psychology tell us about children and media? In, S. R. Mazzarella (Ed.) *20 Questions about youth & the media* (pp. 61-72). Peter Lang Inc.

#### Friday 1/20 (Violence & Fear)

Textbook: Chapter 4—*Media Violence*

Drabman, R. S., & Thomas, M. H. (1974). Does media violence increase children's toleration of real-life aggression? *Developmental Psychology*, 10, 418-421.

#### Wednesday 1/25 (Discussion of developmental media analysis and Advertising Industry & Regulation; lead in to advertising comprehension analysis and schools video online)

Textbook: Chapter 2—*Advertising*

Achenreiner, G. B., & John, D. R. (2003). The meaning of brand names to children: A developmental investigation. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13, 205-219.

Austin, E. W., Chen, Y., Pinkleton, B. E., & Johnson, J. Q. (2006). Benefits and costs of Channel One in a middle school setting and the role of media-literacy training. *Pediatrics*, 117, e423-e433.

### **Wednesday 2/1 (Stereotypes)**

- Coyne, S. M., Linder, J. R., Rasmussen, E. E., Nelson, D. A., & Birkbeck, V. (2016). Pretty as a princess: Longitudinal effects of engagement with Disney princesses on gender stereotypes, body esteem, and prosocial behavior. *Child Development*, 1-17.
- Smith, S. L., & Choueiti, M. *Gender inequality in cinematic content? Females on screen & behind-the-camera in top-grossing 2008 films.*

### **Friday 2/3 (Stereotypes)**

- Greenberg, B. S., & Mastro, D. E. (2008). Children, race, ethnicity, and media. In, S. L. Calvert, & B. J. Wilson (Eds.), *The handbook of children, media, and development* (pp. 74-97). Blackwell Publishing.
- Martins, N., & Harrison, K. (2012). Racial and gender differences in the relationship between children's television use and self-esteem: A longitudinal panel study. *Communication Research*, 39, 338-357.

### **Wednesday 2/8 (Educational/Prosocial media; leading into babies and educational media analysis online)**

Textbook: Chapter 3—*Prosocial and Educational Media*

- Rasmussen, E. E., Shafer, A., Colwell, M. J., White, S., Punyanunt-Carter, N., Densley, R. L., & Wright, H. (2016). Relation between active mediation, exposure to Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, and US preschoolers' social and emotional development.
- Radesky, J. S., Schumacher, J., & Zuckerman, B. (2015). Mobile and interactive media use by young children: The good, the bad, and the unknown. *Pediatrics*.

### **Friday 2/10 (Sex & Relationships)**

Textbook: Chapter 5—*Sex, Sexuality, and the Media*

- Vossen, H. G. M., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2016). Do social media foster or curtail adolescents' empathy? A longitudinal study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 63, 118-124.
- Collins, R. L., Elliott, M. N., Berry, S. H., Kanouse, D. E., & Hunter, S. B. (2003). Entertainment television as a healthy sex educator: The impact of condom-efficacy information in an episode of Friends. *Pediatrics*, 112, 1115-1121.

### **Wednesday 2/15 (Food & Body)**

Textbook: Chapter 7—*Obesity, Eating Disorders, and the Media* (pp. 375-398)

- Perloff, R. M. (2014). Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research. *Sex Roles*, 71, 363-377.
- Moriarty, C. M., & Harrison, K. (2008). Television exposure and disordered eating among children: A



longitudinal panel study. *Journal of Communication*, 58, 361-381.

**Friday 2/17 (Parents/Ratings/Media Literacy)**

Textbook: Chapter 11—Family and Media

Textbook: Chapter 12—*Media Literacy/Media Education*

Byrne, S. (2009). Media literacy interventions: What makes them boom or boomerang?  
*Communication Education*, 58, 1-14.