

ETHN 164 x MUS 153, TuTh 3:30-4:50 CSB 002
University of California, San Diego
Winter, 2007

Jonathan Markovitz
Office: SSB 249
Office Hours: Tu 5:10-6:40;
W 3:10-4:40

African Americans and the Mass Media

This course will examine the media representations of African Americans from slavery through the twentieth century. Attention will be paid to the emergence and transmission of enduring stereotypes, and their relationship to changing social, political, and economic frameworks in the United States. The course will also consider African Americans' responses to and interpretations of these mediated images.

Requirements:

Attendance is mandatory. More than a couple of absences will severely impact your final course grade (unless you are ill and provide a doctor's note). Your final grade will be based upon:

An in-class midterm (40%) **Tues, 2/6**

A comprehensive in-class final exam (40%) **Tentative Date: Tues 3/20 from 3pm-6pm, but Check Final Exam Schedule to be sure.**

Class Participation (10%)

A series of 1-2 page typed papers (10%)

(These will not receive credit if turned in late, but all one-page papers must be turned in by the end of the course in order to receive a passing course grade.)

The 10% figures for Participation and Homeworks are approximate. Basically, as long as you attend all class meetings, participation can either raise or lower your grade by one partial grade. (So, for example, consistent active and helpful participation can push your final course grade up from a B+ to an A-, while a notable lack of contribution to class discussions can push your grade down by the same amount.) Similarly, as long as you complete all homework assignments adequately and on time, they can raise or lower your final course grade by one partial grade. (Homeworks will be graded check, check plus, or check minus, and will not receive comments.) Missing class meetings, or turning in homeworks late, can adversely affect your final course grade much more severely.

Readings for the course:

A reader containing most course readings can be purchased at Cal Copy, 3251 Holiday Ct. (453-9949, in the shopping center just past the Mobil station off campus -- near St. Germain's liquor and deli.). A few additional readings will be available on-line, and the syllabus provides the web addresses. (If the address won't work for any reason, you'll be able to find the article through google or another search engine.)

The course reader must be brought to class each time we meet.

The outline that follows will provide you with a relatively structured idea of what we will be examining, although specific dates for readings and discussions may change as the quarter progresses.

WEEK 1 (1/9, 1/11): Introduction: Popular Culture, Film and Racial Formation

Henry Jenkins, Tara McPherson, and Jane Shattuc, "Defining Popular Culture," in *Hop on Pop*, 26-41

Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, "Hegemony," "Popular"

K. Sue Jewell, *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond*, Chapter 2 "The Social Significance of Cultural Imagery", pgs 15-34

Ed Guerrero, *Framing Blackness: The African American Image in Film*, Chapter 1 “From Birth to Blaxploitation: Hollywood’s Inscription of Slavery,” pp 9- 40

Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, Chapter 4, “Racial Formation,” pgs. 53-76

WEEK 2 (1/16, 1/18): Lynching as “Racial Project”

Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race, & Class*. Chapter 11: Rape, Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist, 172-201

Robyn Wiegman, “The Anatomy of Lynching,” in *American Anatomies*, 81-115.

Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, Chapter 2, “‘The White Man’s Civilization on Trial:’ Ida B. Wells, Representations of Lynching, and Northern Middle-Class Manhood” pgs. 45-76

Dora Apel, “Torture Culture: Lynching Photographs and the Images of Abu Ghraib,” *Art Journal*: Summer 2005; 64, 2, pgs 88-100

WEEK 3 (1/23, 1/25): Legacies of Anti-Racist Cultural Activism: From The Scottsboro Nine to the Kobe Bryant Rape Case

P.J. Ling, “A White Woman’s Word: The Scottsboro Case,” in *Race on Trial: Law and Justice in American History*, Annette Gordon-Reed, ed., pgs. 118-138

Miller, Pennybacker, and Rosenhaft, "Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys, 1931–1934," *The American Historical Review* April 2001
<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/106.2/ah000387.html> (please access article on-line)

David Leonard, “The Next MJ or the Next OJ? Kobe Bryant, Race, and the Absurdity of Colorblind Rhetoric” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, Vol. 28, No. 3, 284-313 (2004) ,
<http://jss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/28/3/284.pdf> (please access article on-line)

WEEK 4 (1/30, 2/1): Television and Representations of Blackness

Herman Gray, *Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for “Blackness,”* Chapter 4, “The Transformation of the Television Industry and the Social Production of Blackness,” pgs 57-69; Chapter 5, “The Politics of Representation in Network Television”

Christine Acham, *Revolution Televised: Prime Time and the Struggle for Black Power*, “Conclusion: Movin’ On Up: Contemporary Television as a Site of Resistance,” pgs 170-194.

Kevin S. Sandler, “Introduction: Looney Tunes and Merry Metonyms,” in Kevin S. Sandler, ed., *Reading the Rabbit: Explorations in Warner Bros. Animation*, pgs. 1-28

Terry Lindvall and Ben Fraser, “Darker Shades of Animation: African-American Images in the Warner Bros. Cartoon,” in Kevin S. Sandler, ed., *Reading the Rabbit: Explorations in Warner Bros. Animation*, pgs. 121-136

WEEK 5 (2/6, 2/8): African Americans in the News, Introduction
TUESDAY: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Stuart Hall, "The whites of their eyes: Racist ideologies and the media"

Martin Gilens, "Race and Poverty in America: Public Misperceptions and the American News Media"

Public Opin Q 1996 60: 515-541.

<http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/60/4/515.pdf> (please access article on-line)

Robert M. Entman and Andrew Rojecki, *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*, Chapter 4, "The Meaning of Blackness in Network News," pgs 60-77, and Chapter 5, "Violence, Stereotypes, and African Americans in the News," pgs 78-93.

WEEK 6 (2/13, 2/15): The Black Press

Ronald Jacobs, *Race, Media and the Crisis of Civil Society* Chapter 1, "Race, Media, and Multiple Publics," pgs. 19-30.

Clawson et al., "Framing Supreme Court Decisions: The Mainstream Versus the Black Press" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 6, 784-800 (2003)

<http://jbs.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/33/6/784.pdf> (please access article on-line).

Rodger Streitmatter, *Voices of Revolution: The Dissident Press in America*, "Chapter 5: Crusade Against the Barbarism of Lynching,"

Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All its Phases*, pgs.14-37

Anna Everett, "The Black Press in the Age of Digital Reproduction: Two Exemplars," in *The Black Press*, Todd Vogel, ed., pgs.244-257

WEEK 7 (2/20, 2/22): Racial Spectacles in the News, Part One: Rodney King and the LA Riots/Uprising; The Murder of Stephen Lawrence

Robert Gooding-Williams, "'Look, a Negro!'" in Robert Gooding-Williams, ed., *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, 1993., Pp. 157-177.

Judith Butler, "Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia," in Robert Gooding-Williams, ed., *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, 1993., Pp. 15-22.

S. Cottle "Mediatized public crisis and civil society renewal: The racist murder of Stephen Lawrence" *Crime, Media, Culture*, 1(1): 49-71

WEEK 8 (2/27, 3/1): Racial Spectacles in the News, Part Two: The Hill/Thomas Hearings and “Freaknik”

Elsa Barkley Brown, “Imaging Lynching: African American Women, Communities of Struggle, and Collective Memory,” pgs. 100-123

Linda Susan Beard, “Of Metaphors and Meaning: Language, Ways of Knowing, Memory Holes, and a Politic Recall,” pgs. 182-199

Marian Meyers, “African American Women and Violence: Gender, Race, and Class in the News,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, Vol 21, #2, June 2004, pp. 95-118.

WEEK 9 (3/6, 3/8): Popular Music, Censorship and Race

Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*, Chapter 5, “Bad Sistas: Black Women Rappers and Sexual Politics in Rap Music,” pgs 146-182.

T.A. Martinez, “Popular Culture as Oppositional Culture: Rap as Resistance” in *Sociological Perspectives* 40 (2): 265-286

M.J. Muratore, “Review Commentary: Framing Violence: Censorship and Race in American Culture,” *Journal of American Culture*, Spring 1996, 93-95

Christopher Sieving, “Cop Out? The Media, ‘Cop Killer,’ and the Deracialization of Black Rage,” in *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 22:4 (October 1998): 334-353

WEEK 10 (3/13, 3/15): Consuming Blackness: Advertising and the Politics of Representation, Prep for Final Exam

M.M. Manring, *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima*, chapter 5, “The Old South, the Absent Mistress, and the Slave in a Box,” pgs 110-148.

Karim Murji, “Using racial stereotypes in anti-racist campaigns” in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* Volume 29, Number 2, Number 2/March 2006, pp. 260-280(21)
<http://taylorandfrancis.metapress.com/media/h82chcapgldjvwec5r02/contributions/g/t/1/j/gt1jj461931w8836.pdf> (please access article on-line -- probably easiest to go through the library, and search for the journal issue)

Ellen Seiter, *Sold Separately: Children and Parents in Consumer Culture*, “Chapter 3: The Real Power of Commercials,” and Chapter 4: “Utopia or Discrimination,” pp.96-144

Elayne Rapping, *The Looking Glass World of Nonfiction TV*, Chapter 9, “Commercials: Television’s Ultimate Art Form,” pgs. 161-172