

Media Ethics
PHIL 317- TH 01

Where: Bunting 480
When: Wednesdays 4-6:45PM

Professor: Firmin DeBrabander
Office hours: Wednesdays 10-12AM
Office: Bunting 425
Email: fdebrabander@mica.edu

Course Description:

We live in a media-infested world; our whole lives are subjected to media transmission of some form or another: TV, film, advertisements, newspapers, the internet. In light of this fact about 21st century culture - and the significant role of artists and designers in shaping those media- it is necessary to consider the moral and political impact and influence of the various media. Do films incline us to violence? Do ads incline us to anorexia? Do newspapers incline us to Republicanism? Underlying these concerns is the larger one about the media's relation to truth and accuracy. Ought the media be objective? Can they be objective? What hidden agendas do the media betray, and how do they betray them? Also, how do the media persuade, compel ... control?

Required Texts:

No Logo by Naomi Klein
Black Looks by bell hooks
Only Words by Catharine MacKinnon
Tragedy and Farce by John Nichols and Robert McChesney
(There will also be several handout articles)

Requirements:

Your final grade in this class will be determined by 4 components: 1) a Midterm essay of 4-5 pages. Its due date is indicated on the course schedule, and I will provide topics for this; 2) a Term paper of 6-8 pages due on the last day of class (or shortly thereafter). This will be a topic of your own choosing. Consider it a personal project, which should concern an ecological topic of your own interest and concern. More details on this later... 3) You will take part in Group Presentations. A separate sheet on that follows. 4) Finally, since this is a discussion class, participation is a crucial part of your grade. You are expected to do the readings carefully and come to class prepared to analyze/ comment/ disparage/ debate. There will be pop quizzes or periodic in-class reflection papers as part of your class participation grade. These will primarily indicate to me that – and how well – you are doing the readings.

The breakdown of your final grade is as follows:

Midterm paper	20%
Final paper	30%
Presentation	30%
Class Participation (including quizzes)	20%

Attendance Policy:

As we only meet 15 times this semester, it is very important that you attend all classes. For two or more unexcused absences, I will deduct 5 percentage points each from your final grade. If you will be absent due to illness or family emergency, I can excuse you from class if you provide written notice.

Institutional Policies:

Plagiarism: MICA will not tolerate plagiarism, which is defined as using someone else's words or ideas without acknowledgment. Please note that only **three contiguous** borrowed and unreferenced words constitute plagiarism. Submitting work containing plagiarism is grounds for **failure** of an assignment, or if serious enough, failure of the course, and will be reported to the Chair of the Language, Literature and Culture department. Repeat offenses will be brought to the attention of Academic dean.

To be responsible when summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting, include a citation like:

“I read in yesterday's New York Times that...”

“As Simone de Beauvoir famously asserts: ‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.’”

“My roommate Pete noticed that...”

Document your citations in a bibliography or Works Cited page at the end of your paper and follow standard guidelines such as MLA or Chicago manual style. Familiarize yourself with these guidelines in Diana Hacker's A Pocket Style Manual, and always check with your instructor or one of the friendly tutors in the Writing Center (410) 225-2418. The Writing Center also has copies of the Hacker.

ADA Compliance Statement

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact [insert instructor's name/title] privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Learning Resource Center at 410-225-2416, in Bunting 458, to establish eligibility and coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to:

<http://www.mica.edu/learningresourcecenter/>.

Health and Safety Compliance

From the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) The Office works to provide EHS support for all members of the MICA community. The primary goal of the Office is to be proactive in establishing a culture of safety in which each member of the community shares ownership responsibility that allows each person to be involved in maintaining a healthy work and studying environment. EHS uses several methods to achieve this objective.

First, the EHS office looks at the totality of the EHS requirements by combining campus needs with state and federal requirements and clearly communicating the shared policies and procedures. Second, EHS identifies training needs and develops guidelines for the use of equipment, material and procedures. Third, we ensure compliance with policies through evaluations, inspections, and committees.

It is the responsibility of faculty and students to understand health and safety policies relevant to their individual activities and to review MICA's Emergency Action Plan, as well as to participate in training, drills, etc. It is also each faculty member's responsibility to coordinate with the EHS Office to ensure that all risks associated with their class activities are identified and to assure that their respective classroom procedures mirror the EHS and Academic Department guidelines. Each of the Academic Department's also publish EHS procedures and policies such as a dress code, the use of personal protective equipment, fire safety, training, and how to properly dispose of chemical waste. Each of these policies and procedures must be followed by all students and faculty. Most importantly, it is the responsibility of the faculty to review, test, and assess each student's awareness of basic safety procedures, such as evacuation routes, use of chemicals, fire prevention, and all other guidelines posted by the Environmental Health and Safety Office, (e.g., smoking policy, independent studio policies, pet policy, disposing of hazardous and chemical waste, etc).

To become a member of the Faculty EHS Committee or for any questions relating to EHS, please call 410.462.7593. You can also visit the department online at www.mica.edu/ehs

CLASS SCHEDULE

9/3- Introduction

9/10- Read for today Naomi Klein's No Logo, pages 3-35

9/17- *No class- Constitution Day conference*

9/24- Rd. Naomi Klein's No Logo, pages 35-61

10/1- Rd. article from Juliet Schor's Born to Buy (handout)

10/8- Rd. bell hooks' Black Looks, chapters 2 and 6

10/15- Rd. bell hooks' Black Looks, chapters 7 and 11

10/22- **Midterm papers due**

10/29- Rd. Catharine MacKinnon's Only Words, pgs. 3-41

11/5- Rd. Catharine MacKinnon's Only Words, pgs. 71-110

11/12- Rd. article from Michael Medved's Saving Childhood (handout)

11/19- Rd. Nichols' and McChesney's Tragedy and Farce, chapters 1 and 2

11/26- Rd. Nichols' and McChesney's Tragedy and Farce, chapter 3

12/3- Rd. article from Noam Chomsky "Collateral Language" (handout)

12/10- Course review and summary

12/17- **Term papers due**