Advertising and Society

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Office Hour: by appointment; Appointment Only: Mon 3-4pm; Appointment only: Mon 3-4 pm  
Section: Thu 1:25 &3:05pm; Thu and Fri 10:05am; Thu and Fri 11:45am

Welcome to our joint project for Spring 2014. Together we will investigate how placing advertising under analysis anthropologically helps us understand complex constellations of belonging and exclusion, aesthetics and power, and capital’s motion in the contemporary. This course takes seriously the role that images play in our lives and the worlds we live in. It focuses especially on those images and stories designed to sell something, whether it is a material object, an identity, national belonging, a place or even an emotion. We will examine the ways that advertising in the United States and globally both shapes and reflects society, culture, history, politics and the economy. This course draws on a wide range of materials from the theoretical, ethnographic to visual, aural and popular culture to help us learn to analyze the complex levels of meaning in both print advertisements and TV commercials. The lectures will discuss theoretical frameworks and apply them to specific advertisements. We will also begin to consider the role of digital interfaces in creating desires and aspirations. Discussion sections are a vital part of the course as this is where you will pay particular attention to the texts, written, visual or digital, that give us the tools and vocabulary to think critically about advertising. They will also be an opportunity to prepare for your assignments.

Objectives and Hopes

Our goals are two fold: 1) To construct a set of collective questions and tools that enable us to better think about the advertising and branding media that saturates our lives; 2) To create an intellectual community in which we encourage and collaborate on one another’s projects. This is a participation based course. Accomplishing these two goals means that reading and participation are mandatory and included in your grade.

Texts will be available on Sakai marked in the syllabus as (S) and others are available online (OL) through the library catalogue. Films shown in lectures are equally important texts and sources of material for assignments and quizzes.
Breaking it down:

You will be evaluated on your attendance and participation in class discussions, especially during sections. There are many ways to be a collaborator in this course. Some of these include: bringing in outside examples, asking text-based questions, actively listening and offering a guiding hand to a colleague. I encourage you to find as many ways as possible to make this course matter to your own intellectual project.

There will be three pop quizzes during either lecture or section that will test your knowledge and understanding of lecture material. You will write two assignments, using course material to consider the mechanisms of advertising and the impact and meaning of particular advertising or branding campaigns or media technologies. Evaluation of all these assignments is based on critical grappling with course material and creativity.

Details of Assignments will be provided closer to due date on Sakai

Grade Breakdown:
30%: Participation and attendance in class and discussion section
20%: Pop Quizzes (Taken during lectures or sections; two highest grades counted)
20%: Assignment 1 Due: 20th February
30%: Final Paper (7-8 pages) Due: 28th April

Policies and Procedures:
1. Paper policy: Submit to drop box on Sakai by 10:00am on due date. Late papers will be penalized. All papers should be titled, typed, double spaced, 12 point Times font, one inch margins. Do not include a cover sheet.
2. Reading: Assigned texts (including films and other media) are central to this class and are meant to be read or viewed in preparation for the section the week that they are assigned. Sections will be used to develop our thinking about these texts and your engagement in these discussions will contribute to your class grade. You are required to develop discussion questions that critically interrogate the texts in relation to both prior readings and particular case studies, projects, media or organizations that interest you. These questions should not be descriptive – what is the text about – or clarifying – what does the author mean – such questions should be posted on Sakai prior to the class discussion. Your questions should show a grasp of the text’s argument and themes and aim to move the discussion to critically evaluate how the author(s) supported their argument or how their analysis helps us think through the overarching themes of the course. Come to class with a typed list of at least 2-3 questions on the week’s materials, including lectures – you may be asked to contribute a discussion question or to hand in your questions at the end of the seminar.
3. Participation: Your participation grade will be based on the quality of your participation during section, in lecture and online. It will not be based on the number of times you speak up in class, although it is important to show up in more than just body every week. As this is a collaborative project an important aspect of your participation is how you engage with your peers. This requires that you commit at the beginning of the class to getting to know your colleagues and trusting the value of dialogue in your own learning. This also means that computers or tablets
should not open or used during discussion sections, unless specific permission is given by the TA or you are given a group exercise requiring working online.

4. **Office hours:** These are a great way for us to learn more about the course, academic life, and expectations. You are invited and encouraged to meet with me and your TA with or without specific questions.

5. **Final grades:** All assigned course work must be completed in order to receive a passing grade.

6. **Plagiarism:** All work submitted must be written by you and for this course. Unacknowledged borrowing constitutes plagiarism, and results in automatic failing. If you have any questions about this, please ask. Please follow the Duke Community Standard in all your work for this class. Use the guidelines laid out by the Duke University Academic Integrity Council at http://www.integrity.duke.edu/

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**Wed 8th January:** Introductions, objectives, hopes

**Sections:** Introductions

**Mon 13th January:** Guideposts and histories
**Wed 15th January:** Why images matter

**Sections:** Tell us!

**Mon 20th January:** Martin Luther King Day
**Wed 22nd January:** The Medium is the Message


**Mon 27th January:** Signifying Practices
**Wed 29th January:** View: Hall, Stuart 1997 *Representation & the media*

**Section:** Discuss *Representation & the media*

**Mon 3rd February:** Making the pitch
**Wed 5th February:** View *killing us softly* Media Education Foundation

**Section:** Wood, Graeme *Anthropology Inc. The Atlantic Monthly*; Mar 2013; 311, 2: 48 (OL)

**Mon 10th February:** Stephanie Friedl: ‘Sponsored content’
**Wed 12th February:** Global Connections

**Section:** Brainstorming for Assignment 1

**Mon 17th February:** Prof Harris Solomon ‘Mediating Fat’
**Wed 19th February:** Gendering the pitch

**Section:** Discussion

**Assignment 1 Due 20th February**
Mon 24th Feb: Prof Orin Starn 'Sports, Advertising, and Society'
Wed 26th Feb: Sporting pitches

Section: Patillo-McCoy, Mary 1999 Nike’s Reign In *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle Class* Chicago: University of Chicago Press pp. 146-166 (S)

Mon 3rd March: *No Logo Brands, Globalization & Resistance* Media Education Foundation
Wed 5th March: Tourism & National Branding


**Week 10: Spring break**

Mon 17th March: Selling healthy bodies/societies
Wed 19th March: Branding the Revolution


Mon 24th March: Representing Others
Wed 26th March: Global Culture

Sections: Matt Ritter 2013 Classic Campaigns: The Reinvention of Ronald McDonald *Advertising & Society Review* 14(3) OL

Mon 31st March: Selling post-racialism
Wed 2nd April: Making Culture


Mon 7th April: Prof Gabe Rosenberg ‘branding the state’
Wed 9th April: View *John & Jane*

Sections: Paper Discussions

Mon 14th April: Commercializing Children
Wed 16th April: Buying a Good Deed

Section: Bornstein Erica 2010 The Value of Orphans In Erica Bornstein and Peter Redfield (Eds.) *Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism Between Ethics and Politics* Santé Fe: School of Advanced Research Press pp. 123-148 (S)

Mon 21st April: View: *Give Us the Money*
Wed 23rd April: Product (RED)

Section: Peer Review

Assignment 2 due Monday 28th April