

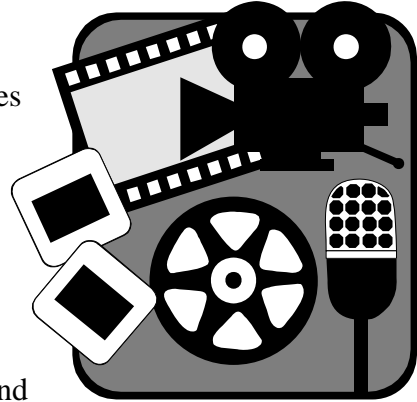
**Theory and Practice of Media Literacy  
BTMM 5310**

Temple University  
School of Communications and Theater  
Department of Broadcasting, Telecommunication and Mass Media

**Fall, 2007  
Professor Renee Hobbs**

**Synopsis**

When students use digital cameras to compose images, analyze stereotypes in the media, create their own websites demonstrating what they've learned about American history, or examine how TV storytelling shapes our understanding of contemporary society, they're engaging in a practice known as 'media education' or 'media literacy.'



What are the intellectual origins of media literacy education in the fields of communication/media studies and education? Why should schools include the analysis of media texts and the production of multimedia messages as a basic part of classroom instruction? What instructional practices most effectively strengthen students' critical thinking and communication skills? What are the tensions, conflicts and contradictions embedded in the ideas and practices of media literacy? What role can research, policy and creative work play in the development of the field? This course explores these questions and more in a seminar that emphasizes students' active construction of knowledge through collaborative and hands-on research activities.

**Faculty**

Renee Hobbs, Ed.D.  
Professor, Department of Broadcasting, Telecommunication and Mass Media  
Media Education Lab, Temple University School of Communications and Theater

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: Mondays 1 – 3 p.m  
And other times by appointment

**Course Meeting Time and Location**

Mondays, 4:40 – 8 p.m.  
Tuttleman 406

## **Required Reading**

Buckingham, D. (2004). *Media education: Literacy, learning and contemporary culture*. London, Polity/Blackwell.

Hobbs, R. (2007). *Reading the media: Media literacy in high school English*. New York: Teachers College Pres.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture*. New York: New York University Press.

Storey, J. (2006). *Cultural theory and popular culture: An introduction*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.

See additional course readings on pages 7 – 9.

## **Course Goals and Objectives**

Students will:

1. Understand the historical, cultural and technological factors that have led to the development of media literacy initiatives designed to promote the cognitive, emotional and social development of children and youth;
2. Gain knowledge about the differing intellectual traditions concerning the integration of technology, media and popular culture ‘texts’ in education;
3. Understand how media literacy is being implemented in diverse educational settings and appreciate the ongoing debates about the structure and content of programs in K-12 and higher education;
4. Recognize how different instructional methods activate critical thinking about the mass media among children and youth and the role of media production activities in media literacy education;
5. Develop collaborative skills related to research and data analysis involving both qualitative and quantitative data;
6. Evaluate media literacy curriculum and identify appropriate curriculum materials for different target audiences and instructional settings;
7. Strengthen curriculum design, critical thinking, creativity and multimedia literacy skills through formal and informal writing and performance activities;
8. Demonstrate the practices of reflection and critical inquiry as they apply to the teaching and learning process.

## **Approach to the Course**

This course primarily employs a theoretical framework stemming from the cultural studies approach to media literacy, although we will touch upon approaches based upon the media effects tradition. The course aims to be both theoretically rich and pragmatically valuable to those intending to provide media literacy education as teachers, trainers or curriculum developers, and to those intending to contribute to research and scholarship on this topic. While the course explores a range of perspectives on media

literacy, it provides particular focus on the methods, content and pedagogy of media literacy education in K-12 and after-school settings in the U.S. and United Kingdom.

### **Course Requirements**

The course uses a 1000-point grading system. Each of the assignments listed below will be introduced by the instructor, who will provide in writing specific expectations and criteria for evaluation. Assignment materials will be available under “Assignments” on the course Blackboard site.

#### Class Participation (100 pts)

Students complete informal homework and other short writing assignments as a means to reflect upon the course readings and prepare for class discussions. They question, share and contribute ideas in the seminar using skills of analysis, integration and synthesis.

#### Literature Review (100 pts)

In response to course readings, students work collaboratively to develop a media literacy wiki. Location:

[http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Media\\_literacy](http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Media_literacy)

#### Model Lesson or Case Study (100 pts)

Students critically evaluate media literacy curriculum materials and demonstrate and deconstruct a lesson; alternatively, they interview an educator who is incorporating media literacy into the curriculum, making connections between the work of the practitioner and key ideas from the course readings. Students prepare a short paper and a 20-minute oral presentation.

#### Team-Based Research Project (200 pts)

Students work collaboratively to contribute to coding and analysis of data from students at the Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Maryland. Students will analyze how well teens critically analyze a news story and produce a short summary of their findings.

#### Scholarly Paper or Creative Project (400 pts) and Poster Presentation (100 pts)

Working individually or with a partner, students complete an original work of scholarship. Creative projects may include the development of print or multimedia-based curriculum materials. Students also present their work in a formal poster presentation at the end of the semester.

### **Grading**

Grades represent the instructor’s assessment of your work as compared to clearly identified criteria for evaluation and in relation to the performance of others in the class. A grade of A represents outstanding or exceptional work; an A- indicates high quality but

not outstanding work; a B+ represents high quality work but with some limitations or evident weaknesses; a B indicates competent, satisfactory work. A B- in a graduate level course suggests that the student's work is lacking in some important way. A grade of C+ or C represents seriously flawed work. In most classes that would mean doing the assignments but misunderstanding fundamental concepts or presenting them in an unacceptable form. A grade of D represents failure and will be given only if assignments were extremely poorly executed or other failure to adhere to norms of appropriate student conduct.

**NOTE:** There are no make-up opportunities for missed assignments. Please do not ask for an exception. Because media businesses rely on strict adherence to deadlines, this course employs a deadline standard similar to most print and TV newsrooms. Work submitted later than 6 pm. on the due date will not be evaluated or counted for course credit.

### **Policy on Disabilities and Special Needs**

Any students who have a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation. Contact Disability Resources at (215) 204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

### **Policy on Attendance and Class Participation**

Attendance at all sessions is expected as a sign of your intellectual curiosity and commitment to the learning process. The instructor will use class attendance as one element to assess class participation. More than one missed class in the semester will lower your course grade. Students are expected to fully participate in all interactive learning experiences and to demonstrate critical thinking and synthesis skills in small group discussion. Students will receive class participation credit for using the online discussion forums on Blackboard to demonstrate their class participation.

### **Policy on Plagiarism**

Students are expected to produce substantial amounts of writing for this course, and it is expected that you will be the author of all the work you submit. Students should use the American Psychological Association citation format for identifying all materials used for reference and information gathering. Please consult the instructor(s) if you have questions on how to identify the information sources that you use in preparing your work. Penalties for plagiarism may range from a reduced grade on an assignment to failing the course.

**Course Schedule**  
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<b>INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA EDUCATION</b>	
8/27	<b>Introductory Themes and Issues</b>
9/3	LABOR DAY, No class
9/10	<b>Historical Context: Media Education and Cultural Studies</b> READ: Masterman, 1985 READ: Eco, 1979 READ: Alvarado, 1981 READ: Storey, Chapters 1 – 4 (pp. 1 – 70)
9/17	<b>North American Intellectual Origins</b> READ: Tyner, 1993 (pp. 170 – 176) READ: Postman, 1985/1990 READ: McLuhan, The Playboy Interview, 1969 READ: Schwarz (pp. 229 – 250)
9/24	<b>The Contemporary Media Education Landscape</b> READ: Buckingham (pp. 1 – 106) READ: Storey, Chapters 6 – 9 (pp. 87 – 172) READ: Hobbs, 1998
<b>ISSUES OF IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
10/1	<b>Media Literacy with Children</b> READ: BFI, Look Again READ: Fuirer (pp. 5 – 9) READ: Thoman & Jolls (pp. 180 – 205) DUE: Concept Paper Proposal, Scholarly or Creative Project
10/8	<b>Media Literacy in K-12 Schools</b> READ: Hobbs, 2005 (pp. 74 – 99) READ: Hart (pp. 23 – 56) READ: Anstey & Bull, 2006 (pp. 56 -81 and 117 -135)
10/15	<b>Focus on Methods and Outcomes</b> READ: Hobbs, 2007 (pp. 1 – 159)

10/22	<p><b>Media Production as a Mode of Learning</b>  READ: Goodman, 2005 (pp. 206 – 228)  READ: Davison, 1993 (pp. 26 -30)  READ: Goldfarb 2002 (pp. 57 – 83)  DUE: Team-Based Research Project</p>
10/29	<p><b>Screening and Discussion: Issues in Youth Media</b>  READ: Buckingham (pp. 107 – 156)  DUE: Model Lesson/Practitioner Interview (group X)</p>
<b>THE FUTURE OF THE FIELD</b>	
11/5	<p><b>New Media Literacy</b>  READ: Seiter, (pp. 19 – 62)  READ: Jenkins White Paper, 2006  READ: Jenkins 2006, Conclusion (pp. 240 – 260)  DUE: Model Lesson/Practitioner Interview (Group Y)</p>
11/12	<p><b>Media Literacy and Social Policy</b>  READ: Lewis &amp; Jhally, 1998  READ: Livingstone, 2004  DUE: Model Lesson/Practitioner Interview (Group Z)</p>
11/19	<p><b>Media Literacy and Health</b>  READ: Austin, 2006  READ: Scharrer, 2006  READ: Primack et al, 2006  OPTIONAL DUE: Draft of Final Paper/Project for Instructor Feedback</p>
11/26	<p><b>The Changing Nature of Literacy</b>  READ: Kress, 2003 Literacy in a New Media Age (pp. 35 -60)  READ: Messaris, 1994 (pp. 1 – 40)  READ: Marsh, 2006 (pp. 160 -174)  READ: Jenkins 2006, Chapter 5 (pp. 169 -205)  READ: Christ &amp; Potter, 1998 (pp. 5 -15)</p>
12/3	<p><b>Synthesis and Wrap Up</b></p>
12/10	<p><b>Student Poster Presentations</b>  DUE: Final Paper &amp; Poster</p>

## Course Readings

- Alvarado, M. (1981). Television studies and pedagogy. *Screen Education* 38, Spring. In M. Alvarado, E. Buscombe and R. Collins (Eds.) *The screen education reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, pp. 191 – 206.
- Anstey, M. & Bull, G. (2006). *Teaching and learning multiliteracies*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association (pp. 56 -81 and 117 -135).
- Austin, E., Chen, Y., Pinkleton, B & Johnson, J. (2006). Benefits and costs of Channel One in a middle school setting and the role of media-literacy training. *Pediatrics* 117: 423-433.
- British Film Institute. *Look Again*. Available online:  
<http://www.bfi.org.uk/education/teaching/lookagain/>
- Christ, W. & Potter, J. (1998). Media literacy, media education and the academy. *Journal of Communication* 48: 5 – 15.
- Eco, Umberto (1979). Can television teach? *Screen Education* 31, Summer. In M. Alvarado, E. Buscombe and R. Collins (Eds.) *The screen education reader*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, (pp. 95 – 107).
- Davison, J. (1993). Theory in practice: Learning media concepts through practical work. In C. Bazalgette, E. Bevort & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide*. London: British Film Institute.
- Hart, A. (1993). Teaching with what? Making sense of media education resources. In C. Bazalgette, E. Bevort & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide*. London: British Film Institute (pp. 99 – 105).
- Fuirer, M. (1992). Cameras in the classroom: media education with 5 – 7 year olds. In C. Bazalgette, E. Bevort & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide*. London: British Film Institute (pp. 5 – 9).
- Goldfarb, B. (2002). *Visual pedagogy: Media cultures in and beyond the classroom*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Goodman, S. (2005). The practice and principles of teaching critical literacy at the Educational Video Center. In G. Schwartz & P. U. Brown (Eds.), *Media literacy: Transforming curriculum and teaching* (Vol. 104, 2005, pp. 206 - 228). Malden, MA: National Society for the Study of Education.
- Hart, A. (1998). *Teaching the media: International perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.

- Hobbs, R. (2005). Media literacy and the K-12 content areas. In G. Schwartz & P. U. Brown (Eds.), *Media literacy: Transforming curriculum and teaching* (Vol. 104, 2005, pp. 74 - 99). Malden, MA: National Society for the Study of Education.
- Hobbs, R. (1998). The seven great debates in the media literacy movement. *Journal of Communication*, 48 (2): 9-29.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *New media literacy: White Paper for the MacArthur Foundation*. Chicago, IL.
- Lewis, J. & Jhally, S. (1998). The struggle for media literacy. *Journal of Communication* 48:109 – 120.
- Livingstone, S. (2004). Media literacy and the challenge of new information and communication technologies. *The Communication Review* 7:3 – 14.
- Marsh, J. (2006). Popular culture in the literacy classroom: A Bourdieuan analysis. *Reading Research Quarterly* 41(2): 160 -174.
- Masterman, L. (1985). *Teaching the media*. London: Comedia/Routledge.
- Messaris, P. (1994). *Visual literacy: image, mind and reality*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Primack B., Gold M., Switzer G., Hobbs R., Land S., Fine M. (2006). Development and validation of a Smoking Media Literacy scale. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* 160: 369 – 374
- Postman, N. (1985). Learning in the age of television. *Education Week*, December 4.
- McLuhan, M. (1969). The Playboy Interview: Marshall McLuhan. Available online: Next Nature, <http://www.nextnature.net/research/?p=1025>
- Multiple authors. Selections from the *Journal of Media Literacy* 54(1), Spring 2007, “Part Two: Browsing through the Years,” pp. 12 – 31.
- Scharrer, Erica (2006) "I noticed more violence:" The effects of a media literacy program on critical attitudes toward media violence. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 21(1) 69-86.
- Schwartz, G. (2005). Obstacles, challenges and potential: envisioning the future. In G. Schwartz & P. U. Brown (Eds.), *Media literacy: Transforming curriculum and teaching* (Vol. 104, 2005, pp. 229-250). Malden, MA: National Society for the Study of Education.
- Seiter, E. (2005). *The internet playground: Children's access, entertainment and mis-education*. New York: Peter Lang.



Thoman, E., & Jolls, T. (2005). Media literacy education: Lessons from the center for media literacy. In G. Schwartz & P. U. Brown (Eds.), *Media literacy: Transforming curriculum and teaching* (Vol. 104, 2005, pp. 180 -205). Malden, MA: National Society for the Study of Education.

Tyner, K. (1993). The tale of the elephant: Media education in the United States. In C. Bazalgette, E. Bevort & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide*. London: British Film Institute (pp. 170 -176).