

School of Journalism – Fall 2013

The University of Texas at Austin

J342F: Women & the News

Dr. Regina Lawrence

T/Th 11:00 – 12:30 BMC 3.204

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Office hours: Thursdays 12:30 – 2:30, or by appointment

Course Overview

This course explores women's relationship to news both historically and currently, and the role of the news media in reinforcing and/or challenging prevailing stereotypes and attitudes about gender. We will focus on women both as producers of journalism and as subjects of media portrayals. We will place those topics in broader perspective by delving a bit into feminist theory, popular culture, and political communication. Ultimately, we aim to grapple with how gender matters in news today—a question that invites many kinds of answers.

By the end of the semester students should be able to:

1. Describe the history of women's relationship to U.S. news and describe the roles women play in producing and shaping news.
2. Understand and be able to apply key concepts and theories to analyze and evaluate the roles and representations of women in public life, the news, and popular culture.
3. Understand ethical questions surrounding how media portray women/gender/sexuality, and understand competing arguments regarding those ethical questions.

Beyond that, my goals for this course include:

- That we deepen our understanding of the role of gender in American history, mass media, and political culture and improve our ability to think and communicate about these issues.
- That we maintain lively and open lines of communication, allowing us to learn from one another as we exchange ideas about inevitably controversial questions.
- That this course will aid each of you in your intellectual and professional development.

Required Text and Reading Materials

We have two required books for this course. All are available through the University bookstore and through various online booksellers:

Maurine H. Beasley and Sheila J. Gibbons, *Taking Their Place: A Documentary History of Women and Journalism*, 2d ed. (Strata: 2002)

Lily J. Goren, *You've Come a Long Way Baby: Women, Politics, and Popular Culture* (Kentucky: 2010).

Additional required reading materials will be posted on the Blackboard site for this course.

Course Assignments and Grading (percentages indicate value toward final grade)

A summary of assignments and their contribution to your final grade appears below.

Assignment	Due	% of Final Grade
Short Response Paper #1	Tuesday Sept. 24	10%
Short Response Paper #2	Tuesday Oct. 8	10%
Short Response Paper #3	Thursday Oct. 22	10%
Analysis of News Coverage of an Issue of Your Choice	Thursday Nov. 7	25%
Group Presentation on women in pop culture	Tuesday Dec. 3	20%
Social Media	Thursday Oct. 31	15%
Participation	Ongoing	10%

Assignments in brief: Instructions for each major assignment will be distributed as we move through the semester. Here in brief is what you will be expected to do for each portion of your final grade:

Short Response Papers: These 2-page papers will require you to respond concisely and thoughtfully to a question regarding material covered in our course readings and lectures.

News Analysis Project: Each student will work independently to analyze news coverage of a woman or a women's issue in the news surrounding election 2012. This will involve carefully analyzing news coverage of the individual or issue using simple quantitative and qualitative measures, then writing a news analysis piece or op-ed.

Group Presentation: Students will work in groups of 3 to answer a set of questions about a popular culture "artifact." Groups will choose the artifact to analyze (e.g. a television show, an advertising campaign, a music video, a pop star, etc.) Each student will be expected to play a role in gathering material, analyzing it, and presenting it to the class. Group members will evaluate one another's contributions to the group effort.

Social Media: To be announced.

Participation: Our goal of having lively class discussions requires students who are prepared to discuss the day's material. I will take attendance regularly; participation will be measured by attendance plus your thoughtful and prepared contributions to class discussions, the level of effort shown in your assigned work, and in your willingness to seek additional guidance as needed via email or office hours.

Extra credit: Opportunities for extra credit will be announced throughout the semester. These will involve attending talks by journalists and scholars on campus and writing a 2-page report that links the topics addressed at the event with material we discuss and read about for this class.

Two opportunities early in the semester:

* Monday September 9th, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM: **Gail Collins, *New York Times* Journalist and Editor**, Etter-Harbin Alumni Center Connaly Ballroom. Free and open to public. Collins was the first woman to edit the *New York Times* op-ed page and has written four books, including her latest, *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present*, published in 2012.

* Tuesday September 24th (time to be announced), Belo Center for New Media: **Kathleen Carroll, Executive Editor and Senior Vice President of the Associated Press**, will address the state of accountability journalism today.

Grading: An A-range grade will be given to work that goes substantially beyond the formal requirements of the assignment by showing originality, creativity, and strength of argument, organization, and writing. A B-range grade will be given to work that fulfills the assignment with noticeable, but not thorough, achievement in these areas. Such work might also include flawed reasoning or organization or writing problems (sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary, etc.). A C-range grade will be given to work showing genuine effort that largely fulfills the assignment requirements but displays substantial weaknesses in several of the above areas. D work may meet some or all of the minimum requirements of the assignment in a perfunctory fashion, but shows considerable weaknesses in the areas above. An F grade indicates failure to fulfill the assignment.

Late work/missed assignments: Some work cannot be late because the class meeting for that day depends on your contribution. Thus, the group project presentations cannot be late; you will lose full credit if you are not ready when they are due. For your other, written work, you will lose one letter grade if you fail to hand an assignment in when due (e.g. a B paper will automatically become a C paper), and another grade increment for each day after that. No work will be accepted more than three days late.

Additional Course Policies & Resources

Class sessions: Students will be expected to arrive in each scheduled class having read all materials assigned for that day and ready to discuss those materials with others.

Use of IT in class: Use of cell phones is not allowed in my classroom. Laptops are allowed, even encouraged, but I will revoke that privilege if it becomes a distraction rather than an enhancement of our learning environment.

Use of Blackboard: In this class I use Blackboard--a Web-based course management system with password-protected access to distribute course materials, to make course announcements, to post grades, and to submit assignments. You can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk (see <http://www.utexas.edu/its/helpdesk/>).

Use of E-mail for University Correspondence with Students: All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

Students with disabilities: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

University Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

University policy on holy days: A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete assigned work.

Q drop Policy: The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six. The University may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line ("BCAL"): If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-505 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Resources for Learning & Life at UT Austin: The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. You are particularly encouraged to use the Learning Skills Center on campus for help on writing assignments. Also, the PCL reference librarians can assist you with online news retrieval and other information finding tasks.

The UT Learning Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>

Career Exploration Center: <http://www.utexas.edu/student/careercenter/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>

Safety issues: <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/terms/>

Class Schedule

Section 1

Introduction to the Study of Gender & Media

Thursday Aug. 29: Welcome and introductions; Defining “Media” and “News”

Tuesday Sept. 3: Women/Gender/Sexuality in the News Today

Assignment: BRING TO CLASS ONE news story that touches on issues of women, gender, and/or sexuality. Be prepared to share it with a small group of your classmates, and to complete the following sentences:

“I chose this story because _____.”

“I think this story is important because _____.”

“I like/don’t like how the story portrays _____.”

Thursday Sept. 5: Why Study Women in the News?; Defining Gender & Understanding Stereotypes

Readings: **Lorber, “The Social Construction of Gender”; **selections from Lippmann, *Public Opinion*

ALSO: Take the “Gender-Career/Implicit” test at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/selectatest.html>. (This test will take a little time to complete, so save time for it just as you would to do the reading. Also, feel free to take one of the other “Implicit” tests listed, such as the ones on sexuality, gender & science, or race).

Tuesday Sept. 10: Gender Stereotypes and Barriers in Contemporary Media: A First Look

Readings: “Silenced: Gender Gap in News Coverage of the 2012 Election” <http://www.4thestate.net/female-voices-in-media-infographic/#.T-nsro5fGQo>; “Women Aren’t Principal News Sources on Women’s Issues” http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/women-arent-principal-news-sources-on-womens-issues-4th-estate-analysis-finds/2012/06/25/gJQADVbi2V_story.html

Thursday Sept. 12: Preview of News Analysis Project; Women in Media and Public Life Today

Guest Speaker: Linda Moore, LMF Strategies

Ms. Moore is a veteran of The White House, Capitol Hill, and national political campaigns. She has worked as an advisor and strategist for Indiana Senator Evan Bayh, President Bill Clinton, and for the John Edwards and Hillary Clinton campaigns; more recently, she has been a resident at the Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics. Read more about Linda at <http://www.iop.harvard.edu/linda-moore-forbes>.

Tuesday Sept. 17: Female "Double Binds"

Readings: **selections from Jamieson, *Beyond the Double Bind*: chapter 1, "The Binds that Tie" and chapter 4, "Bind #4: Femininity/Competence"

Thursday Sept. 19: Synthesis of Section #1

No required readings for today

Section 2

Women in American Journalism

Tuesday Sept. 24: The Early American Press & The "Cult of True Womanhood"

Readings: *Taking Their Place*, Introduction plus chapters 1 – 3 (pp. 1-24); intro to "Voicing Women's Experience" plus chapter 5 (pp. 31-37).

RESPONSE PAPER #1 DUE via email to regina.lawrence@austin.utexas.edu

Thursday Sept. 26: Creating Alternative Public Spheres: Muckraking and the Suffrage Press; Pioneering Black Women Journalists

Readings: *Taking Their Place*, chapter 6, 8 & 10

Guest lecture: Kathleen McElroy, PhD student, UT-Austin School of Journalism.

Ms. McElroy has worked at the New York Times, The National Sports Daily, Newsday, and Austin American-Statesman, among other papers. She received her Master's degree from New York University, and her research interests include race and media, obituaries, and reader engagement. Her career goal is to teach and write about journalism.

Tuesday Oct. 1: Early Contemporary Women In the News: Political & Metro Reporters

Readings: Taking Their Place, chapters 7 & 11

Guest lecture: Christy Hoppe, Austin Bureau Chief for the Dallas Morning News.

Ms. Hoppe oversees coverage of Texas state politics, state policy and state agencies from the capitol news bureau of the Dallas Morning News. She has covered politics within the Texas state capitol through the terms of four governors. She blogs regularly at <http://trailblazersblog.dallasnews.com/author/choppe/>.

Thursday Oct. 3: Early Contemporary Women In the News: Politics, Social Justice, and Eleanor Roosevelt's "Ladies Only" Press Conferences

Readings: Taking Their Place, chapter 13 & 14

Tuesday Oct. 8: "Second-Wave" Feminist Media

Readings: Taking Their Place, chapters 17, 18 & 19

FILM: ***Gloria: In Her Own Words***

RESPONSE PAPER #2 DUE Oct. 8th via email to regina.lawrence@austin.utexas.edu

Thursday Oct. 10: Women in Contemporary Journalism: Moving Toward Equal Opportunity?;
Preview: News Analysis Project

Readings: Taking Their Place, chapters 21 & 23

****Nan Robertson, "The Emperor's Hall," from *The Girls In the Balcony* (1992)**

Tuesday Oct. 15: "Tokenism" in the News Industry

Readings: Taking Their Place, chapter 22

****Hardin & Whiteside, "Token Responses to Gendered Newsrooms: Factors in the career-related decisions of female newspaper sports journalists"**

Thursday Oct. 17: Synthesis of Section #2/ Check in on News Analysis projects

No required readings for today

Section 3 Women, Politics, and Media

Tuesday Oct. 22: Gender Stereotypes in Contemporary News: A Deeper Look

Readings: *Taking Their Place*, chapter 24

You've Come a Long Way Baby, **chapter 12** [this is not a typo—we'll read this chapter of this book first]

RESPONSE PAPER #3 DUE via email to regina.lawrence@austin.utexas.edu

Thursday Oct. 24: Glass Half Empty or Half Full?: Media Coverage of Women in Politics

Readings: **Lawrence, "Do the Media Give Women Candidates a Fair Shake?"

Tuesday Oct. 29: Gender in Presidential Election News

Readings: ***Hillary Clinton's Race for the White House*, chapter 3, "The Media and the Path to the White House"

***"Post-Feminist Role Model or Victim of Sexism?", from Beall and Longworth, *Framing Sarah Palin*

Thursday Oct. 31: News & Sexism in Quantitative versus Qualitative Terms

Readings: ***Hillary Clinton's Race for the White House*, chapter 5, "Quantity versus Quality of Media Coverage"

Tuesday Nov. 5: Workshop: Analyzing Gender & Sexism in Coverage of Your Chosen News Topic

Thursday Nov. 7:

NEWS ANALYSIS DUE TODAY via email to regina.lawrence@austin.utexas.edu

Discussion of Student News Analyses

No assigned readings for today

Section 4

Women in Popular Culture

Tuesday Nov. 12: Thinking about Pop Culture, Women, and Feminism; Second- vs. Third-Wave Feminist Readings of Pop Culture

Readings: You've Come a Long Way Baby, Introduction & chapter 2 ("Femininity and Feminist Gestures in Chick Flicks")

Thursday Nov. 14: Representations of Women & Girls in the Media Today: A Critical View

Film: *Miss Representation*

Readings: You've Come a Long Way Baby, chapter 11 ("Women's Magazines for the 'I'm-Not-a-Feminist-But' Generation")

Tuesday Nov. 19: Women's Relationship with Beauty

*Readings: **Selections from The Beauty Myth*

Assignment: In preparation for our discussion on Thursday, please send me ONE example of a pop culture artifact (an advertisement, TV or movie character, a website, a social media meme, etc.) that portrays or employs sexuality in some way. Please submit your artifact by the end of day Tuesday.

Thursday Nov. 21: Hypersexualization in Pop Culture

*Readings: **Hatton and Trautner, "Equal Opportunity Objectification? The Sexualization of Men and Women on the Cover of Rolling Stone"*

Tuesday Nov. 26: Second- vs. Third-Wave Feminist Readings of Pop Culture; TV Portrayals of the Presidency

Readings: You've Come a Long Way Baby, chapter 6 ("Why Are All the Presidents Men?")

Thursday Nov. 28: NO CLASS—Thanksgiving holiday

Tuesday Dec. 3: Group Presentations on Popular Culture

Thursday Dec. 5: Group Presentations on Popular Culture