

Psychology in the Media  
Honors Seminar  
010:096:19  
Drs. Kim & Otto MacLin  
Spring 2009  
Baker 315  
TR 11-12:15

**Contact Information:**

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**Course Description:**

In this highly interactive seminar we will explore how psychology is depicted in popular media (e.g., accurate and inaccurate portrayals of schizophrenia), how media can provide examples of psychological concepts making them easier to understand (e.g., from portraying fight or flight mechanisms to relational vs. instrumental aggression), how we use media for psychological purposes (like social networking), and how knowledge of psychology informs the creation and understanding of various media (e.g., from how lighting impacts mood to persuasion techniques in commercials). Media covered will include film (movies, tv, commercials), print (newspapers and magazines), and digital (internet) forms.

**Required Texts:**

- One introductory of psychology book. You may get any introductory psychology book. We suggest buying a used one off of amazon. Just get one that has been published since 2000. You'll find that they are quite inexpensive if they are not the current edition.

**Format of student participation and evaluation:**

Students will be evaluated based on their class participation and discussion of their expertise area, a media blog, media evaluations, and a final.

Media Blog (10 pts per week=150 pts)-Students will blog their experiences with various media here:  
<http://www.psychologicalscience.com/maclink/>

Media Evaluations (10 @ 20 pts each=200pts)-Throughout the course, students will submit media sources accompanied with psychological analysis, for a total of 10 Media Evaluations.

Expertise area: Students will choose an area of expertise (essentially, to be in charge of the material from one chapter from their intro to psych book). This way, during discussions, we can rely on everyone to know one area really well and to be sensitive to finding/seeing that content in the media we are evaluating.

Discussions/Participation: students will use their textbook as a general resource to determine what is psychological about the media we are discussion. So while each person will have an expertise area, each student will also develop a general understanding of all areas of psychology (so you can't just read "your" chapter!).

Final (100 pts)-Thursday May 7, 10-11:50am