

## CAS 497F: Children and Television

Instructor: Brett Lunceford  
Office: 316 Sparks, Cubicle #9  
Office Hours: T 12:00 – 3:00

Email: bll165@psu.edu  
Office Phone: 863-0127  
Mailbox: 232 Sparks

Course Location: 216 Thomas Building  
Meeting Times: 9AM – 4:30 PM, Saturdays, 11/13 and 11/20.

**Please note:** Penn State encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. This syllabus can be made available in alternate formats for students who require this assistance. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please let me know as soon as possible.

### Overview of the Course

This course is designed to examine issues surrounding children and television from two different perspectives—media effects and rhetorical criticism. However, a background in either of these perspectives is not required. I assume that each of you have chosen this course because of some interest in the interaction between children and television. To that end, I encourage you to follow this interest in the class discussions as well as in the paper that you will write for this class.

### A Note on my Teaching Philosophy

I believe that every student in my class has the ability to succeed in this course. I do not “give” grades; students earn grades. While this may seem like semantic hair splitting, it is an important distinction. I cannot grade on effort—I must grade what you actually do. My job is to push students to do their best and to then exceed that standard. I recognize that this is futile unless I also provide the support and assistance that each student needs to excel. Therefore, I provide office hours and contact information and expect students to use them. I strive to provide the tools and support necessary for each student to succeed. However, you will not excel unless you too are willing to pay the price of excellence. Bottom line—you do your part to excel and I will help you reach that goal.

### Class Climate

My role as your instructor is to create a comfortable class environment where differing perspectives can be explored. Such an environment cannot be achieved without your active participation. To that end, the number one rule of this class is respect—for yourself, for each other, and for me. The issues we will explore have no set answers. Thus, you are likely to hear things that you disagree with. While I encourage discussion,

this must be done in a spirit of inquiry. “Arguing to win” or arguing simply for the sake of arguing will do little to enlighten the rest of us.

### Course Objective

Upon completion of this course students should be able to demonstrate a broad understanding of the scholarship surrounding the interaction of children and television. This will be assessed through the in class discussion and the final paper.

### Course Policies

1. Because this course only meets twice, **attendance is mandatory**. Because of the amount of material covered in each session, missing one or both classes will result in a failing grade. Missing part of a class will negatively impact your final grade in the course.
2. **Academic dishonesty** will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty is defined as follows: “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students” (The University Faculty Senate Policies for Students).
3. **Participation**. Your grade in this class depends in part upon your level of participation. I assume that you will come to class each day prepared to discuss the readings. Good participation can include enthusiastically joining activities, asking and answering questions, actively listening to your peers and the instructor, and providing relevant, outside material to class. Alternatively, withdrawing from group discussions and activities, reading the paper while others are speaking, making constant discussion and/or noise, falling asleep, or arriving late will all be noted as poor participation and will be reflected in your course grade.
4. **This is a cell free zone!** Turn off your cell phone when you come to class. If you have an absolute need to have a cell phone on (you are an on-call EMT or you are expecting your significant other to go into labor and deliver a child any day now) tell me. However, I anticipate that this course is what you have planned for the day.

### Grades

Grading is based on a 100 point scale:

Research paper:	50 points
Participation:	50 points

## **Grade Scale (100 points)**

A = 93-100

A- = 92.9-90

B+ =89.9-87

B =86.9-83

B- =82.9-80

C+ =79.9-75

C =74.9-70

D =66.9-60

F -59.9 and below

Your continued enrollment in this class signifies your knowledge of and agreement to comply with the guidelines, policies, and requirements contained in this syllabus for CAS 497F.

## **Course Schedule**

All readings can be found in the library's electronic reserves under my name.

## **Saturday, 11/13**

Discuss final paper assignment and readings.

### **Readings:**

#### **Criticism and Television**

Black, E. (1970). The second persona. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56(2), 111-119.

Vande Berg, L. R., Wenner, L. A., & Gronbeck, B. E. (2004). Media literacy and television criticism: Enabling an informed and engaged citizenry. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 48, 219-228.

#### **Adults, Children, and Television**

"Is watching TV or playing the computer more fun than reading books?" (2001). *Australian Screen Education*, (25), 118-119.

Rogers, F. (2001). A Point of View: Family Communication, Television, and Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. *Journal of Family Communication*, 1, 71-73.

#### **Choose one of the following:**

Hoffner, C., & Buchanan, M. (2002). Parents' responses to television violence: The third-person perception, parental mediation, and support for censorship. *Media Psychology*, 4, 231-252.

Nathanson, A. I., Eveland Jr., W. P., Park, H.-S., & Paul, B. (2002). Perceived media influence and efficacy as predictors of caregivers' protective behaviors. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 46, 385-410.

## **Children, Cognition, and Television**

Chandler, D. (1997). Children's understanding of what is 'real' on television: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Media*, 23, 65-80.

Flavell, J. H., & Flavell, E. R. (1990). Do young children think of television images as pictures or real objects? *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 34, 399-419.

### **Choose one of the following:**

Anderson, D. R., Bryant, J., Wilder, A., & Crawley, A. M. (2000). Researching Blue's Clues: Viewing behavior and impact. *Media Psychology*, 2, 179-194.

Fisch, S. M., Truglio, R. T., & Cole, C. F. (1999). The impact of Sesame Street on preschool children: A review and synthesis of 30 years' research. *Media Psychology*, 1, 165-190.

## **Saturday, 11/20**

Discuss final paper topics and readings.

### **Readings:**

#### **Children, Television, and Advertising**

Manning, S. (2000). The television news show kids watch most. *Columbia Journalism Review*, 38(6), 55-57.

### **Choose two of the following:**

Chandler, D., & Griffiths, M. (2000). Gender-differentiated production features in toy commercials. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 44, 503-520.

Larson, M. S. (2003). Gender, race, and aggression in television commercials that feature children. *Sex Roles*, 48, 67-75.

Pecora, N. (1995). Children and television advertising from a social science perspective. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 12, 354-364.

Preston, E., & White, C. L. (2004). Commodifying kids: Branded identities and the selling of adspace on kids' networks. *Communication Quarterly*, 52, 115-128.

## **Children, Television, and Socialization**

**Choose three of the following:**

Abelman, R., & Atkin, D. (2000). What children watch when they watch TV: Putting theory into practice. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 44, 143-154.

Buckingham, D. (1997). The making of citizens: Pedagogy and address in children's television news. *Journal of Educational Media*, 23(2/3), 119-139.

Klapper, H. L. (1978). Childhood socialization and television. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 42, 426-430.

Watkins, B. (1985). Television viewing as a dominant activity of childhood: A developmental theory of television effects. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 2, 323-337.

## **Friday, 12/10**

**Final paper due in my mailbox (Sparks 232) before 4:30PM.** This room is often locked around 4:55PM. I encourage you to get the paper in to me before Friday if possible.