

**Psychology 119T: Senior Seminar on Media Contexts of Adolescence and
Young Adult Development
MWF 9-11:30, SS1 Room 161**

Instructor: Margarita Azmitia, PhD

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Office Hour: Wednesday 11:30-12:30 pm or by appointment, 369 SS2 (I will always be available immediately after class if you'd like to discuss something)

Course Description: Media is a powerful context for adolescents' and young adults' development and socialization. We will discuss theory and research on how different media influences development paying special attention to age, gender, ethnicity, and other social group memberships. We will also address individual differences in media use and influence. While we will focus on adolescents and young adults, we will include some material on children.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the role of media in adolescents' and young adults' lives and development.
2. Become familiar with key theories, methods, and empirical findings in media psychology and how adolescents' and young adults' characteristics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, personality) can moderate media influence.
3. Think critically about media contexts, selection, and effects and be able to synthesize information from different sources and apply it to real-world examples of media influence/issues.
4. Learn to present and discuss material during seminar through contributions to discussion and presentations of articles and issues.
5. Learn effective scientific writing through commentaries and a research paper.
6. Develop the skill to communicate with non-academic audiences (e.g., parents, teachers, adolescents) and inform policies about media influences.

Required Readings: The **required text is available at the Bay Tree Bookstore**. The other readings will be posted on **ecommons**. Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to be called upon to share your written commentary or explain the key points of the reading.

Required text: Jordan, A. B., & Romer, D. (2014). *Media and the well-being of children and adolescents*. NY: Oxford University Press

Requirements:

Attendance, Written Commentaries, and Participation—30%. Please arrive on time and with your typed commentary about the readings. Your commentary will help you stay engaged in the class and participate in the discussion of the material. The goal of the commentary is to help you come to class prepared with some

introductory thoughts about the topic and the readings. For people who are not used to speaking up in class, you can always read your commentary to begin to feel more comfortable participating in discussion. Commentaries: A typed, double-spaced paragraph (NO MORE THAN ½ A PAGE) about your reflections, ideas, and especially important, discussion questions, about the reading. They are due at the beginning of class, when I will mark them as “on time.” Almost everyone has opinions on media, usually based on personal experience. I hope that the seminar will help you become a media scholar—looking at issues objectively, questioning your assumptions, and using theory and research to support your arguments. At the same time, you can and should connect the material to your own life and experiences, but opinion should not be the primary basis of your commentaries, contributions to discussion, and other seminar assignments.

Please monitor classroom discussion to avoid monopolizing the conversation . At the same time, be responsible for “carrying the load” for discussion. If you do not initiate contributions, I will call on you to do so. Be respectful of your classmates and build on discussions or challenge their ideas in a constructive way.

If you are absent, please do not email me your commentary, as commentaries are intended to facilitate in-class discussion.

Homework assignments and in-class writing exercises and quizzes (25%). I will periodically assign homework or administer unannounced in-class quizzes and exercises to assess your understanding of the reading and your ability to discern future directions for research (e.g., develop a theoretical rationale, research questions/hypothesis, and method for a study or apply the material to real-world examples of media influence). No late homework assignments will be accepted and there is no make-up for writing exercises and quizzes.

Leading the discussion of an assigned reading (15%). Identifying the key strengths and limitations of an empirical study is an important competency in our field. During week 2 of the seminar, you will choose one of the assigned readings for this assignment. Your task is to develop discussion questions that will help you lead a 20-minute discussion of the reading. One way to have a lively conversation is to include an in-class exercise to engage your classmates in the issues you selected for discussion. Instructions for this assignment will be posted on ecommons, and you are quite welcome to talk with me in advance for your plans for this assignment.

Be creative! Assume that everyone has read the article and see your task as getting your classmates to talk about the readings, pose questions, and offer critiques, and think about ideas that might extend the article—research, domains, etc.

Paper (30%; written version 25%, presentation 5%). You will write a 5-7 page, typed, double-spaced paper on particular issue/topic of media contexts of adolescent and/or young adults’ development. Instructions and deadlines for different parts of this assignment are on the syllabus and will be posted on

ecommons. Your final paper is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, August 27. You will give a 10-minute presentation of your paper on Friday, August 29. Late papers will be penalized by $\frac{1}{2}$ grade.

Plagiarism and Cheating. Please consult the UCSC guidelines for cheating and plagiarism. Make sure you credit your sources appropriately (consult APA style). Cheating also involves copying from another person's commentary, quiz, homework assignment, or paper or fabricating information. Cheating/Plagiarism will result in a 0 for that assignment and a letter to your department chair and provost. A second instance of cheating and plagiarism will result in an F (no pass) for the course.

DRC students: Please let me know as soon as possible (and provide the supporting paperwork) if you will need DRC accommodations.

**Course Schedule and Reading Assignments (may be adjusted as needed).
Readings will be posted on ecommons, please do the reading before coming to class.**

Week 1: Media as a Context for Adolescent and Young Adults' Development

Monday July 28: Introduction, discuss assignments. Watch the video by PBS Frontline, Digital Nation.

Wednesday July 30: Media Influence and Development: Theories and Models

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1: Print Media. While media influences are often portrayed very negatively, there are many positive media influences on our lives. Find and bring to class a newspaper or magazine article on a topic of media and adolescent/young adult development that interests you. Select an article that includes an empirical finding (the data doesn't have to be complex, it could simply involve percentages or general patterns of responses). Write a short commentary on that includes the author's argument about media influence and your assessment of the empirical evidence the author is using to support his/her argument. Be prepared to present and discuss your commentary in class.

ecommons

Kirsch, S. J. (2010). *Media and youth: A developmental perspective*. NY: Wiley Press. Chapters 1 and 2: Developmental Issues, Social Media Theories.

Valkenburg, P. M., & Jochen, P. (2013). The differential susceptibility to media effects model. *Journal of Communication*, 63, 223-243.

Friday August 1

Applying theories to media contexts of adolescent and/or young adult development; Advertising and recruiting the media as a partner for intervention

Homework Assignment 2. Select two theories/models of media influence. Then, select a media topic that interests you. Write a 1 to 1 and 1/2 page (typed, double spaced) description of a study that would compare and contrast these theories. What pattern of findings would support or disconfirm the theories? Your study should include a Research Question/hypothesis, a short summary of each theory and how it explains media effects, your thoughts about potential age OR gender OR ethnic OR individual differences in the media effects you anticipate, and a brief methods section. Be prepared to discuss and present your study in class.

Text Jordan & Romer

Chapter 13. Nightingale, M. (2014). Behind the scenes. Working with Hollywood to make positive social change (201-225)

Week 2: Monday and Wednesday: Adolescents and Young Adults as Consumers of Media: Advertising and Health Friday: Begin Educational Media

Monday August 4: Advertising and Health
Text, Jordan & Romer:

Chapter 4. Harris, J. L. (2014). Examining the harmful effects of food advertising on children and adolescents: Opportunities for research to inform policy. (52-69).

Chapter 5. Wassssup? Adolescents, Drugs, and the media. (70-89).

Film: The merchants of cool

Wednesday August 6: Media, Body Image, and Mental Health
ecommons

Jeffers, A.J., Cotter E. W., Snipes, D.J., & Benotsch, E. G (2013). BMI and depressive symptoms: The role of media pressures. *Eating Behaviors, 14*, 469-472.

Schooler, D., & Daniels, E. A. (in press). I am not a skinny toothpick and proud of it. Latina adolescents' ethnic identity and responses to mainstream media images, *Body Image*.

Smolak, L., Stein, & Stein, J. A. (2010). A longitudinal investigation of gender role and muscle building in adolescent boys. *Sex Roles, 63*, 738-746.

In class project: small group work to develop policies for media advertising targeting adolescents and young adults. Come to class with some ideas that you can build on in your small group work.

Friday August 8 and Monday August 11: **Educational Media**

NOTE: Bring to class a typed, double-spaced topic proposal for your paper. Your proposal should include a few sentences on what you want to focus on and include two or three APA style (complete) reference of articles you have found on your topic. You will share your proposal with seminar members.

ecommons

Hobbs, R., Donnelly, K., Friesem, J., & Moen, M. (2013). Learning to engage: how positive attitudes about the news, media literacy, and video production contribute to adolescent civic engagement. *Educational Media International, 1-17*.

Text Jordan & Romer

Chapter 11. Wartella, E., & Lauricella A. R. (2014), Early Learning, Academic Achievement, and Children's Digital Media Use. (173-187).

Chapter 14. Cohen, D., Betancourt, J., & Kotler, J. (2014). Sasame SWorkshop's Tal, Listen, Connect: A multiple media resource to benefit military families and young children. (226-246).

Monday August 11: Can young adults really multitask without hindering their learning?

Homework Assignment 3: Keep a one-day diary of your multitasking behavior, noting the frequency of multitasking during academic activities. (e.g., surfing the net during lectures, while reading for class, etc.). Write a paragraph that answers the following questions: How frequently did you multitask? What prompted multitasking? Do you agree with the authors of the assigned readings that multitasking impedes academic achievement? Why or why not? We will discuss your findings in the context of the assigned readings.

Ecommons

Kirschner, P. A., & Karpinski, A. C. (2010). Facebook and academic performance. *Computers n Human Behavior*, 26, 1236-1245.

Jacobsen, W. C., and Forste, R. (2011). The wired generation. Academic and social outcomes of electronic media use among university students. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 14, 5, 2011.

Week 3 (Wednesday and Friday): Violent Media and Aggression

Wednesday August 13:

Text: Jordan & Romer

Chapter 7. Prot, S., Anderson, D., Gentile, D. A., Brown, S. C., & Swing, E. L. (2014). The positive and negative effects of video game play. (109-128).

Chapter 8. Livingston, S. (2014). Risk and Harm on the Internet. (pp. 129-146).

Friday, August 15: Cyberbullying

Ittel, A., Azmitia, M., & Pfetsch, J. S., & Muller, C. R. (2013). Teasing, threats, and texts: gender and the dark side of cyber-communication. In P. J. Leman & H. R. Tennenbaum (Eds.) *Gender and development* (pp. 42-63). Routledge

Underwood, M. K., Ehrenreich, S. E., More, D., Solis, J. S., & Brinkley, D. Y. (in press). The BlackBerry Project: The Hidden World of Adolescents' Text Messaging and Relations With Internalizing Symptoms. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*.

Film: Cyberbully

Week 4: Sex, Sexuality, and Media; Work on Papers, Begin Social Media

Monday August 18

Ecommons

Joshi, S. P, Peter, J., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2011). Scripts of sexual desire and danger in US and Dutch teen girl magazines: A cross-national content analysis. *Sex Roles, 64*, 463-474.

Text, Jordan & Rommer

Chapter 6, Brown, J. D., El-Toukhy, S., & Ortiz, R. (2014). Growing up sexually in a digital world: The risks and benefits of youth's sexual media use. (90-108)

Chapter 9, Ybarra, M. (2014). Technology and public health interventions (147-160).

Wednesday August 20

First half of the seminar: Bring a rough draft of your paper for peer editing.

Second half of the seminar: Watch film: Generation like

Friday, August 22: Social Media and adolescents and young adults' lives

ecommons

Ahn, D., & Shin, D. (2013). Is the social use of media for seeking connectedness or for avoiding social isolation? Mechanisms underlying media use and subjective well-being. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29*, 2453-2462.

Manago, A. M., Taylor, T., & Greenfield, P. M. (2012). Me and my 400 friends: The anatomy of college students' facebook networks, their communication patterns, and well being. *Developmental Psychology, 48(2)*, 369-380

Yang, C. & Brown, B. B. (2013). Motives for using Facebook, patterns of facebook activity, and late adolescents' adjustment to college. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 42*, 403-416.

WEEK 5: Media and Identity Development

Monday August 25: Media as a context for identity development

ecommons

Davis, K. (2013). Young people's digital lives: The impact of interpersonal relationships and digital media use on adolescents' sense of identity. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29(6)* 2281-2293.

Huntemann, N. & Morgan, M. (2012). Media and identity development. In D. G. Singer & J. L. Singer (Eds). *Handbook of children and the media* (2nd ed, pp. 303-319). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wednesday August 27: Gender and Identity Development

Your papers are due at the beginning of class

ecommons

Knobloch-Westerwick, S., Kennard, A. R., Westerwick, A., Willis, L. E., & Gong, Y. (in press). A crack in the crystal ball? Prolonged exposure to media role portrayals affect possible future selves. *Communication Research*.

Scharrer, E. L. (2013). Representations of Gender in the Media. *The Oxford Handbook of Media Psychology*, 267-284, NY: Oxford

Friday August 29: Race and Ethnicity, Paper presentations, final thoughts on Media and Adolescents and Young Adults Development.

ecommons

Behm-Morawitz & Ortiz, M. (2013) Race, Ethnicity, and the Media In K. E. Dill (Ed.). *Oxford Handbook of Media Psychology* (pp. 252-270). NY: Oxford.

10-minute presentations on papers. Use the first five minutes to tell us 2-3 key things you learned about your topic and the second five minutes to propose issues/questions that you think are important foci for future research.