

BAA [Manufacturing Identity in the Media / Grade 12]

District Name: Vancouver School District

District Number: 39

Developed by: Chris Howey & Yik Wah Penner

Date Developed: July 14, 2011

School Name: Eric Hamber Secondary School

Principal's Name: Dianne Good

Board/Authority Approval Date:

Board/Authority Signature:

Course Name: Manufacturing Identity in the Media

Grade Level of Course: 12

Number of Course Credits: 4

Number of Hours of Instruction: 115

Prerequisite(s): None.

Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required: It is recommended that the teacher have access to a computer, and a projector.

Course Synopsis: The course, *Manufacturing Identity in the Media* will examine the ways in which media creates identities which are often shaped by stereotype. Our goal will be to explore the social and cultural relevance of these produced identities in the day to day lives of students. Learning outcomes for the course are grouped under these curriculum organizers: Creativity and Communication, Stylistic Elements & Principles of Writing, Forms and Conventions of Writing, Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical). Students will engage in various forms of expression including writing, video/image production and/or audio production.

Rationale: Everyday students negotiate a barrage of media (text, image and sound) that either actively or subversively shapes how students see themselves and the world around them. In this course students will be alerted to and asked to question the ways in which people are portrayed in media based on that person/character's gender, sexuality, race, socio-economic status as well as other competing identity factors that the students will identify. Students will be able to articulate what a stereotype is, how and why it is created and by whom? They will further explore what are the cultural and social significance of these produced identities. Once they have done so students will then attempt to place themselves within the socially constructed framework they have identified. In doing so students will be able to see the ways in which media acts as an expression of power and become more self aware of who they are.

Organizational Structure:

Unit/Topic	Title	Time
Unit 1	Identity: What makes you, you?	20 hours
Unit 2	Media and the Production of Identity.	20 hours
Unit 3	Reproductions of Identity in the Media: Sexuality	25 hours
Unit 4	Reproductions of Identity in the Media: Race	25 hours
Unit 5	Reproductions of Identity in the Media: Socio-economic status	25 hours
Total Hours		115 hours

Unit/Topic/Module Descriptions:

Unit 1: Identity: What makes you, you?

20 hours

This course begins with an exploration of what is Identity? Is it self founded, or is it influenced by those around us? Students will explore and define in their own terms what identity is before we collectively agree to a working definition. Students will be asked to articulate in written and verbal form what they believe their identity is. In doing so students will examine the naturalization of some identity factors they believed previously to be self fostered. We will discuss scales of influence (peers, institutions (including school), and Mass media to name a few). Students will then begin to see that what one student holds as the core of their identity may be vastly different from their peers - we wish to explore why this is. We will also explore the concept of can we be defined only in relation to another persons identity? As well as looking at why stereotypes are important and ever prominent in our everyday lives.

Curriculum Organizer – Creating and Communicating Concepts

It is expected that students will:

- be able to articulate their perceived sense of identity in relation to both external (eg. media) and internal factors (eg. bias)
- be able to articulate identity factors (eg: class, race, gender etc.)
- be responsible for engaging with multiple writing processes (taught within the course)
- present their research findings to their peers
- participate in regular class/group discussions relating to identity

Curriculum Organizer – Applied Research

It is expected that students will:

- articulate the connections between stereotypes and “reality” in media sources they find
- be able to identify who is creating stereotypes and for what purpose

Curriculum Organizer – Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical)

It is expected that students will:

- be able to recognize that social influence shapes how they view their identity and their identity may shift as they move from one social location to the next.
- be able to see how culture influences how identity is shaped; that identity is not a fixed entity over location and place.
- question the level of agency they have in the creation of their identity. They will do so by identifying factors which may influence their identity such as parents, school, church or their friends etc.
- map in written and visual forms the ways their identity has changed over the course of their lives
- discover and identify what they believe to be their core identity values and also see which ones have been more temporal and lasted only a short time.

Curriculum Organizer – Exploration/Analysis of Media Source

It is expected that students will:

- be able to identify in media sources people and/or organizations in which they believe they identify with. They will be encouraged to explore and articulate the reasons for their choice.
- review a media source which their peer has chosen and discuss with that peer their findings.

Unit 2: Media and the Production of Identity

20 hours

This unit builds on the first unit by exploring the ways in which identity is framed and influenced by various forms of media. We will discuss how the representations of identity we see within varying forms of media are often unapologetically based in stereotype. We will explore what the purpose of this is and why so often we are most comfortable with individuals when they fit an expected personality profile. Students will be asked to deconstruct a character of their choice and rewrite them as they would alternatively see them giving reasons for their choices. Students will be asked to indicate the influence audience plays in the choices they make when constructing their character identity. They will also comment on the role audience plays in the choice of their character construction and in broader mainstream media.

Curriculum Organizer – Creating and Communicating Concepts

It is expected that students will:

- be able to point out traits which can be considered stereotypes in the characters we study
- be able to identify identity factors (eg: class, race, gender etc.) and give reasons for why these factors are important in the construction of identity.
- be able to construct in written form a character profile.
- express an understanding of how identity is shaped by societal norms and identify pressures and procedures which regulate these norms.
- create alternative and transgressive characters identities to compare how such a shift would change the dynamics within the social and cultural world the character exists in.

Curriculum Organizer – Applied Research

It is expected that students will:

- find a news story that deals with an identity factor which either relates to an aspect of their identity or a chosen character.
- speak to the influence of power and its control over the free expression of identity. Students will find a person or character and apply their understanding of power and control to that individual.

Curriculum Organizer – Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical)

It is expected that students will:

- be able to recognize that media is one of the strongest modes of influence in shaping identity.
- be able to articulate why media chooses to represent certain biases and speak to the influence of audience.
- recognize the importance culture plays on the construction of identity as it pertains to gendered perceptions of identity.
- identify media that appeals to their sense of self and identity.
- research how an identity factor has or hasn't changed over time through media sources chosen by the student. Students will also explore what influences social and cultural norms have played this change or lack thereof.

Curriculum Organizer – Exploration/Analysis of Media Source

It is expected that students will:

- Apply representations of identity present in media to their own identity and indicate if they agree or disagree with these representations. In doing so students will highlight the source of the media and speak to possible bias present within that media source.
- Compare how two different media sources with opposing biases present the same identity factor (eg. sexuality).

Unit 3: Sexuality

25 hours

Overview: Who we desire is part of who we are and because of this our sexuality will always play an important role in the formation of our identity. But sexuality is more than just who we desire, as sexuality creates real world identities. These identities create places and services which are specific to sexual identities such as bars, coffee shops and community centres. But often to enter these spaces people claim a visible and “performed” identity which is recognized as being a part of that group’s identity. Students will ask how much agency people have in creating their identity if there are already pre-established expectations of how they should be and act. How is it different for gay people to claim an identity as opposed to straight people? We will continue to ask what happens if you don’t enact an expected performative and is how your identity viewed as consistent over social groupings, culture and place?

Curriculum Organizer – Creating and Communicating Concepts

It is expected that students will:

- be able to articulate how sexuality plays a part in identity formation
- show an awareness of the range of sexual identities which exist
- be able to articulate how sexual identities exists within a social/cultural hierarchy and speak to the power relations which create and support this.

Curriculum Organizer – Applied Research

It is expected that students will:

- be able to recognize how sexuality is represented in media and articulate who is creating these identities.
- apply critical thought and deconstruct normalized sexual identities

Curriculum Organizer – Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical)

It is expected that students will:

- be able to convey how historically sexual identities have shifted and give reasons why this has occurred
- be able to see how context and location plays a huge part into the social and cultural formation of sexual identity.
- be able to see how other factors such as gender and race influence and alter a persons sexual identity.
- question the idea of sexual identity as it pertains to the act of sex versus the act of performing a preexisting sexual identity which is socially and culturally recognized.

Curriculum Organizer – Exploration/Analysis of Media Source

It is expected that students will:

- find media sources which present a sexual identity of a person/character and speak to what they believe are the social and cultural factors which effect that person’s identity.
- research the source of the media to identify the bias of the creator or the representing agency.
- discuss with a peer the findings of their research and lead a class discussion based on their discussion.

Unit 4: Race

25 hours

Overview: This unit is dedicated to understanding the construction of an identity based on race. Race more so than sexuality is a visible aspect of a person's identity. The colour of one's skin is often, one of, if not the first ways in which we are presented to other individuals. Assumptions of who are and the way we act are then often forced upon us based on cultural and social understanding which are specifically race based. Knowing this people often enact a visual identity that either conforms to (traditional) or deviates from the expected racialized identities. But, how race is perceived is negotiated both through the individual and the receiver (either an individual or a group of people) often formed by expectations of how that person should “be” based on stereotypes. The unit will be focused around several case studies in which students will work with both primary and secondary sources to understand how racialized identities are constructed. Through critically analyzing case studies, students will be better able to improve their understanding of the issues surrounding the portrayal of race in the media, which will lead to better dialogue around the perceptions of human diversity.

Curriculum Organizer – Creating and Communicating Concepts

It is expected that students will:

- be able to articulate their perspectives on how race influences their construction of identity.
- be responsible for engaging with multiple writing processes (taught within the course)
- present their research findings to their peers
- participate in regular class/group discussions relating to identity

Curriculum Organizer – Applied Research

It is expected that students will:

- Research and locate multiple examples of racial stereotyping in various media.
- be able to identify who is creating the stereotypes and for what purpose.
- be able to deconstruct a naturalized race identity and identify the causes of naturalization

Curriculum Organizer – Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical)

It is expected that students will:

- demonstrate an awareness of social and cultural issues (providing examples present in current media)
- Construct a timeline of how a racialized identity has changed through time

Curriculum Organizer – Exploration/Analysis of Media Source

It is expected that students will:

- be able to recognize and identify the control and scope of media and society as it pertains to race.
- be able to recognize how different media types create different prospectives/values

unit 5: Socio-Economic Class

25 hours

Overview: This unit will focus on the relation between socioeconomic position (both perceived and objective) and the construction of identity. We want students to consider how a person's wealth both individual and their family's may influence their perspective of socially constructed reality. How might a person's world view shift if they had to work two jobs to pay their bills and go to school: students will consider how this might effect their identity. By considering and recognizing privileges which are afforded by wealth students will come to understand how identities are classed. They will also be able to draw on the past two units and see how both race, sexuality and also gender can effect social-economic status and ultimately a person's identity. This unit will be primarily focused around three case studies, however other materials will also be included for the purpose of comparison. Through this unit, students will gain a broader understanding the determining components of socioeconomic class (class theory), and the how these portrayals of class are further enforced by the media- and for what purpose.

Curriculum Organizer – Creating and Communicating Concepts

It is expected that students will:

- be able to articulate how socioeconomic class is a factor in the creation of identity.
- be informed on the media's influence on perpetuating ideas of social stratification.
- conduct presentation(s) in a coherent and articulate manner on the topic of identity based on class.

Curriculum Organizer – Applied Research

It is expected that students will:

- apply critical thinking skills (questioning, analyzing, comparing, summarizing, defending..etc) to case studies of class theory.
- demonstrates effective researching skills, including:
 - accessing information
 - collecting and evaluating data
 - organizing and presenting information

Curriculum Organizer – Contexts (Personal, Social, Cultural, Historical)

It is expected that students will:

- demonstrates a knowledge of contemporary and historical factors that help define socioeconomic class.
- discuss how class portrayed through the media.
- evaluate the components of socioeconomic class and the media's portrayal of its significance.

Curriculum Organizer – Exploration/Analysis of Media Source

It is expected that students will:

- research examples of socioeconomic class's significance in popular culture as portrayed through media.
- analyze media sources for inherent messages regarding socioeconomic class

Instructional Component:

- Direct instruction (Lectures, Power Points, Prezi..etc).
- Indirect instruction
- Group projects
- Self reflections/Free writing
- Self and Peer Evaluations
- Modelling
- Brainstorming
- Group discussions/Panel discussions

Assessment Component:

Seventy percent (70%) of the marks will be based on projects that illustrate students' understanding of the concepts being put forward throughout the course. These projects will be based on case studies that are introduced periodically for each segment of the unit. This will demonstrate not only the understanding of the material, but also of the development of critical and analytical thinking that are instrumental when dealing with the topic of identity. Projects will contain written components as well as visual and audible components and will draw upon and use depictions of identities constructed by mainstream media. Students will have the ability to propose the format which they feel will work best for their project, but all projects must use the mediums of text, image and sound.

Thirty percent (30%) will be devoted to individual writing projects and reflections. This formative assessment will be conducted in order to gauge the students continued growth of understanding and thinking of the subject matter.

Assessment Matrix:

Type of Assessment	Detail	Weighing
Formative (70%)	Assignments (Presentations, Written and Multi-modal)	30%
	Individual Daily Reflections	20%
	Blog Discussion posts	20%
Summative (30%)	End of unit project	30%
	<u>Total:</u>	<u>100%</u>

Learning Resources:

Teacher's lecture notes.

Hand outs and assignments.

Teacher's resource blog.

Additional Information:

This is a new, locally developed course for senior secondary students. By design, it is culturally relevant, easily conducted with minimal materials, and has cross curricular applications. This course has yet to be delivered in its entirety in a secondary school, however components have long since been taught in school settings in Canada and abroad. The course is designed to enable students to develop independent critical thinking and examine the values contained in media messages.

Performance Methods	Personal Communications	Other
Group projects. Assignment completion. Presentations of group and individual projects.	Self evaluation. Peer evaluation. Blog discussions. Self reflection writing pieces.	Teacher observation of in class performance. Rubrics. Checklists. Discussions. Rating scales

Additional Resources:

- ◆ Benschoff, Harry M. **America on film : representing race, class, gender, and sexuality at the movies** Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub., 2004.
- ◆ Foster, Gwendolyn Audrey. **Class-passing : social mobility in film and popular culture** Carbondale : Southern Illinois University Press, c2005.
- ◆ Gandal, Keith. **Class representation in modern literature and film**New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- ◆ **The Hidden foundation: cinema and the question of class** / David E. James and Rick Berg, editors. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, c1996.
- ◆ Sharot, Stephen. "Class Rise as a Reward for Disinterested Love: Cross-Class Romance Films, 1915-28." *Journal of Popular Culture*; Jun2010, Vol. 43 Issue 3, p583-599, 17p

Web sources:

The Association for Media Literacy-Nova Scotia:
http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/AMLNS/media_literacy.html

The Canadian Journal of Film Studies: <http://www.filmstudies.ca/journal/>

The Great Canadian Guide to Movies: <httpwww.pulpanddagger.com/movies/filmtv.html>