



Contemporary India

COMM 375: *Gender and Indian Media*

Course Description

From Hindu mythology to the pages of Bollywood gossip magazines, Indian womanhood has been a constantly-evolving site for the mapping of cultural norms, desires and anxieties. The simultaneous exaltation and oppression of femininity, in all its nuance and variation, is both reinforced and contested in the many and various channels of mass media in contemporary Indian society.

In a democracy as diverse and complex as that of India, mass media is a key tool of communication that simultaneously creates, interrogates, and subverts. Through a critical exploration of gender as it is constructed and represented in Indian film, theatre, television, and advertising, this course addresses timely and relevant questions relating to women's issues and the (re)making of Indian womanhood in contemporary India.

Course Schedule

Session 01-2/21 Introduction to Indian Society and Role of Women

Readings:

Rao, Shankar. (2013). "Women in Indian Society." *Sociology- Principles of Sociology with an introduction to Social Thought*. S Chand and Co Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 834 – 857

Session 03-4/21 Status of Women in India, Gender and Fundamental Rights

Readings:

Rao, Shankar. (2013). "Women in Indian Society." *Sociology- Principles of Sociology with an introduction to Social Thought*. S Chand and Co Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 834 – 857

Session 05-7/21 Broad Overview of Indian Media and Media Issues

Readings:

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012) "Introduction : Media and Mediations -- Representations change and continuity in Indian popular culture and gender". *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 1-30

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012) "Indian media in transition -- Recent Past and Present". *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 31- 52

Session 08-21 Gendered Media and Mediated Gender: A Critical Appraisal

Interactive session with journalists in Pune

Readings:

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012) "Media responsibility - The winding road ahead." *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 182- 204

Session 09-11/21 Addressing Gender Issues in Print Media: Newspapers & Magazines

Readings:

Chaudhuri, Maitrayee. (2000). "Feminism in Print Media". *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*. Vol. 7. Pgs. 263

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012). "Print media and popular culture: agents with a difference." *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pp. 140 – 181

Sharma, K. and Joseph, A., Eds. (1994). *Whose News? The Media and Women's Issues*. Second Edition. Sage Publications: New Delhi. (excerpts of relevant chapters will be read out during class)

Session 12-14/21 Gender and the Small Screen

Television program clippings to be viewed

Readings:

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012). "Television: images and the imaginary." *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pp 96 to 116

Session 15-17/21 Gender Construct through Films in India

Film clippings to be viewed and transition studies

Readings:

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012). "Filming change, securing tradition: a Hobson's choice or a dynamic duality." *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pp 53-95

Session 18-19/21 Gender, Culture and Advertising in India

Readings:

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012) "Advertising: Encoding Seduction." *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi. Pgs. 117 – 139

Session 20-21/21 **Gender and Theatre in India**

Readings:

Bharucha, Rustom (2009). "Towards a politics of sexuality - Critical notes on *Spider Woman and Fire*." *The Politics of Cultural Practice*. Oxford University Press: India. Pp. 108 – 128.

Field Visits

Field visits are being arranged, and dates will be announced at the beginning of the semester. Field visit topics and locations may be subject to change.

1. Interaction with Third-Gender Theatre Group
2. Interaction with Undergraduate media students from Symbiosis

Course Texts

Dasgupta, S., Sinha, D. and Chakravarti, S. (2012) *Media, Gender and Popular Culture in India: Tracking Change and Continuity*. Sage Publications: New Delhi.

Sharma, K. and Joseph, A., Eds. (1994). *Whose News? The Media and Women's Issues*. Second Edition. Sage Publications: New Delhi.

(2011). *The Hoot: Watching Media in the Subcontinent*. <http://www.thehoot.org>

The Palace of Illusions, Chitra Banerjee-Divakaruni, Anchor books (2008)

Course Films

Bedi, B. (Producer). Metha, D. (Director). (1996). *Fire*. Canada: Trial by Fire Films.

Chopra, Y. (Producer/Director). (1997). *Dil Toh Pagal Hai*. India: Yash Raj Films.

Khan, Mehboob. (Director). (1957). *Mother India*. India: Mehboob Distributors.

Kumar, N. (Producer). Sen, A. (Director). (1984). *Paroma*. India: Usha Enterprises

Menon, S. (Producer). Revathy. (Director). (2002). *Mitr – My Friend*. India: Telephoto Entertainments Ltd.

Pal, K. (Producer). Bhatt, M. (Director). (1982). *Arth*. India: Anu Arts.

Santoshi, R. (Producer/Director). (2001). *Lajja*. India: Santoshi Productions.

Anusha Rizvi, Mahmood Farooqui (Director). (2010) *Peepli live*: Aamir Khan Productions, UTV Motion Pictures

Shonali Bose, Nilesh Maniyar (directors). (2014), *Margarita, with a Straw*: Viacom18 Motion Pictures

Evaluation

Attendance and Class Participation **10 %**

Assignment 1: Response Paper **20 %**

A response paper based on the interaction with the Third-Gender Theatre Group and evaluating it with print and/or film/ or advertisement addressing the issue.

Assignment 2: Response Paper **20 %**

Write a critical note on the interaction with media persons on “Gendered media and mediated gender.”

Assignment 3: Film Paper **25%**

Watch any of the films listed and write a critique on women and women’s issues portrayed in the movie. Evaluate how the portrayal of women raises contemporary concerns.

Assignment 4: Research Paper **25 %**

This is a research paper wherein the students will explore and assess any gender oriented issue as reflected in any form of Indian media of their choice – newspaper, magazine, television, and advertising – and critically evaluate its impact on contemporary Indian society. This research will incorporate primary observation based on interviews and interactions that students conduct during the course on gender issues. Topics will be decided by students in consultation with faculty.

Grading

Alliance programs utilize the follow standard grading policy well accepted by most US institutions.

Excellent	A	93-100%	Good	B+	87-89%	Acceptable	C+	77-79%
	A-	90-92%		B	83-86%		C	73-76%
				B-	80-82%		C-	70-72%
						Unsatisfactory	D+	67-69%
							D	63-66%
							D-	60-62%
						Failing	F	<60%

Course Policies

Exams and Assignments

Students are required to take all regularly scheduled exams in courses for which they are registered, and to submit all assignments on time. Any compelling academic, personal, or medical reason that might justify a rescheduled exam or assignment must be brought up to the Resident Director, not program faculty. Failure to take scheduled exams or submit the

requisite assignments for a course will adversely affect your grade as per the stated grading criteria for each course.

Classroom Conduct

Student punctuality is extremely important in China and India. Please do not be late for classes or other activities, as it is considered impolite to do so. It is improper to eat in class, to engage in other activities such as texting, or to slump or nap. Students are expected to be alert and engaged as a sign of respect for their professors.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory. It is essential that the students participate fully in the coursework and all required academic activities. Authorized absences may only be approved by the Resident Director, and students are expected to make up any missed work. Unauthorized absences will adversely affect a student's grades.