

Growing up in a Media World

Enrollment: 54      Responses: 46

**STUDENT LEARNING**

1. **What are the most valuable things you have gained from this course? (Possibilities may range from acquisition of very concrete skills or knowledge to changes in perspective or ways of thinking.)**

The absolutely emphatic, lively discussions or rich, insightful, and diverse course readings provided me an overview and in-depth analysis of many media forms. It's rare, I think, to so thoughtfully explore what media is and how it impacts children. The seeds for questions (related to media), that engagement in this course has planted in my mind are, without a doubt, most valuable.

It's hard to imagine what hasn't been gained. This class is truly amazing. I have a huge grasp now on media, its effects, strategies to better its educational value, and so on. If I had gained nothing at all, I would have still left this class thinking, "What an incredibly enjoyable experience!"

I gained an increased understanding of the pervasiveness of media, different theories and a wide range of media activities.

(no comments)

I have learned a broad range of topics concerning media (both commercial and educational), on television and computers (internet and video games). The two papers were interesting because they required me to use and learn two different research methods, content analysis and interview. Also, the readings helped to lay a foundation in children's media, and the various kinds of research people have done in the past (like longitudinal studies, interviews, literature reviews, and experiments).

An understanding of how young children learn from television. There is a lot of bad children's TV out there. (Did I need a class to learn this?)

I learned how to do a content analysis – that project was very useful in getting us to think about television in a different way. Looking at multiple forms of media and how they pervade people's lives was very interesting, particularly because people now live such different lives that are centered around certain media.

A terrific course that provides strong empirical and qualitative overview of media and children; I developed a strong understanding of the issues and themes regarding especially TV and children, including practice on how to use the analytic tools of the domain (i.e., content analysis, interviews, etc.)

That the media can have both positive and negative effects on children and that these media can be used to help children learn important lessons and understandings of the world around them.

I gained: Broad perspective of media and their affects; Different studies and research done in the interest of media affect on children; Concrete first-hand experience doing content analysis.

Gained invaluable information about media in all of its forms, especially within the context of children's development; and gained working knowledge of research skills, especially in content analysis and interview study.

I liked doing the research papers. I hadn't really done any field research/interviews before this. Also, I liked getting the inside scoop on the industry. Knowing what I know now, I would take this course again if I had to go back in time and choose new courses.

I gained an initial understanding of the role media plays in the lives of children. I was glad to find out more about the concrete effects of media on children. I appreciated the "behind-the-scenes" aspect of guest speakers.

I gained new understanding of depth and breadth of theories and issues related to children and media; concrete understanding of a few research methods.

I gained a keen analytic eye and a better understanding of the importance of media literacy and even some ideas about how to integrate media awareness into school life.

Lectures – material, reading selections, discussions, activities/viewing were all very helpful. I've learned so much more about how to think about media and what kind of research is out there on the subject. This information will be helpful to me when I am a parent some day. Schools need to teach this material.

I have learned a great deal about the way the media world works, specifically about how a show gets produced. I have also learned a lot about how to look at the effects media has on children and young adults.

This has been an absolutely incredible course. I gained a valuable overview of the research in the field; introduction to and insight from amazing guest speakers; inspiration to apply all of this information to my own interests.

This course was a good opportunity to immerse myself in all the latest research and thinking into media effects on children. It was effective in opening my eyes to issues (violence on TV, gender, multiculturalism) that I had not been as clear on before.

Skills: Writing a content analysis, an ethnographic profile of a media user, and a media proposal. Knowledge: Effects of media on children; intentions (and blind-spots) of

media-makers; breadth of participants in the media world (advocates for children; scholarship; regulation; kid's perspectives); breadth of media (videogames, television, film) and the relative popularity of each.

Overview of how media affect children's learning; its role and outcomes.

WOW -- this class it just so unlike any other I've taken. I gained so much – really thinking about the vulnerability and also the power children experience as media users. The media interview was a wonderful way to talk and exchange with a young media user – she was a living, feeling example of who we were talking about in class. The opportunity to pursue any topic for the final paper has given me a chance to completely immerse myself in a completely new area. I had never even thought of issues like chat rooms on the internet, or of media literacy – this class exposed me to so much.

Wow, there is so much! Well, since I have a great deal of interest in the media world, this course was especially fascinating to me. To find out all the statistics about media usage across age/gender/social class/ etc., was amazing knowledge → and striking! I learned about the Children's Television Act, the 3-hour rule, advocates for children's media and all their endeavors/accomplishments. I learned about Bandura and other learning theorists that have input on the way that digital media might affect children's learning. The most helpful information for me was all the information about pro-social behavior and how children's television has shifted from Ding-Dong School, which was slow-paced, almost didactic, to these high-strung, highly visual and fast-paced, violent kids' shows of today.

I've gained a new perspective on the business behind media. This class presented new ways of thinking about media around us as well as a very important explanation of the vast business surrounding it.

This course provided: Exposure to a variety of theories and concepts both through readings and discussion; Experience in areas of original research through a variety of assignments of various kinds (i.e., content analysis, media user interview, presentation, and so forth).

Perspectives on the position of media in today's world. How kids learn, react to, reflect media, particularly TV.

I feel that I have gained concrete skills in media evaluation through a content analysis assignment and very careful guidance through the process by both Joe and the TFs. The readings were really interesting and definitely presented me with perspectives I have not considered before. I think my outlook on media and the effect it has on young people has changed dramatically, and I have been guided to develop a more critical eye.

This was my favorite class! I learned so much (concrete skills, knowledge, etc.) but most importantly, I have been inspired and encouraged to think about ways in which media influences kids (and what this means for the future). I want to continue researching and studying the topics brought to my attention in this class.

This class really opened my mind about issues of children in the media. Even though it is an area I probably won't enter as a career field, the information is extremely valuable and will help me be a more informed citizen, student, and parent.

Joe's class taught me to think about media in ways that I'd never even considered. Now when I watch a program, things like demographics and content analysis rush in my head.

This has been an absolutely lovely course that has allowed me to take a deeper look at the media, and how it affects our children. Children are heavily influenced by what entertains them and by what they receive through the media, and this course has shown that. END

I gained a broad understanding of current research on media and children and a solid sense of current media trends and offerings for kids.

I had participated in Media Studies before, but this course taught me about the theories and research involved in the field. The content analysis and interview assignments made me more aware of how media research works, and now I am able to be more critical of published reports on the media.

I have a better sense of what children's media is out there – we've done a broad survey of various forms and I'm glad to have better working knowledge of the media field.

I have learned how to do a content analysis as well as how to approach critical issues in the media. I have enjoyed the class, which is one of the most valuable things to be because I will remember all that I have learned better. I have changed my ways of thinking about media and the business behind it.

I learned about the media industry: how it earns its money, gains its audience through marketing, and how it works to entertain children through media which targets them. The course helped me to place children's media (both educational and purely entertaining) in a framework in which to understand the effects of such media in developing children.

How to design a research project and present results. Ethic issues one must consider to do research. Influences of media in children's and teenagers' behavior. Possible uses of media to educate. I found very valuable the guidelines to evaluate the quality of children's programs as well as the characteristics of programs for young viewers. Names and topics of top researchers in media use, and control. It was great to have access to the latest studies. The process of developing a TV show.

This course has changed the way I view media. I have realized I can no longer see media in terms of “good” or “bad,” but have to see it more holistically. I also feel more empowered in terms of my own media discretion and in terms of knowing how to make positive changes.

I'd had a lot of media courses as an undergraduate and what I loved about this course was that I looked at media \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible] an adolescent's point of view and also learned a lot about the educational context of media.

Great overview of many types of media and the effects of those media on children. Great readings, and a ton of directions to head from here. It has definitely made me more aware of the extent of many media issues (i.e. prevalence of TVs in homes, studies on violence in media, ineffectiveness of ratings systems).

Differentiating pro-social from educational material. How to do content analysis. The magnitude and wealth of effect media have on children.

Incredible range of information on children's interaction of media through all life stages. Wonderful guest speakers from all fields for the class' many interests. Great ability to engage in discussion with classmates.

(no comments)

Understanding of the enormous and pervasive influence of media on children. I had no idea just about the volume of media children consume. It has also given me ideas about how to bring some of this understanding into the classroom.

A broad range of media theories. Great provocative guest lecturers.

Better understanding of the influences media can have on kids and possibilities for using media to educate.

## **COURSE ACTIVITIES**

**2. What specific course activities and materials did you find most valuable? (Consider lectures, section discussions, case studies, guest speakers, readings, field activities, written assignments, feedback from the instructor(s), etc.) How did these activities or materials help you to learn?**

The selection of readings were, as a whole, tremendous. Moreover, section meetings provided an opportunity to discuss readings, and so section meetings were also immensely valuable.

Joe's lectures are amazing. He knows his stuff and conveys it perfectly. Additionally, the guest speakers brought in were all so different and really addressed the interests of so

many people. They were people that are actually relevant to the everyday aspects of media that we often take for granted. His assignments are all so meaningful. I finished them and felt like I really learned a lot from them (rather than feeling like I spewed back everything we had already learned in class).

Variety of real examples used in class was great – hands on experience really adds to the class, as did the guest speakers.

Blatt brings in phenomenal guest lecturers, leaders in their respective industry, that gave valuable, first-hand insight about their field. I loved the class presentations at the end of the semester where we were asked to evaluate current children's media. Gave us a good overview of what children are currently watching/doing.

Both papers were very interesting, although they required a lot of time and planning. The guest speakers were outstanding; gave real insight to the field including MTV, Disney, WGBH, and others.

The lectures were great – Joe is a very engaging lecturer and enthusiastic about his subject. I also valued the smaller discussions in section, but because of the focus on student presentations each week, these discussions didn't happen too often.

The guest speakers were all wonderful and provided many interesting viewpoints. The content analysis and interview paper were helpful in giving us experience doing some of our own research on what we studied.

Guest lectures (WGBH, Disney, MTV). Readings were great. Assignments were focused on both areas of interest but also intended to teach the "practice" of research in this area; well "scaffolded" for learning and applying concepts.

The content analysis took a long time but it allowed me to see what the quality of TV is and what kids can see in a given day and time.

Probably, I'd have to say, the readings. Lectures were very good overviews of different themes we covered.

Class speakers were great; helped actualize much of the class material. Student presentations were valuable; listening to and working with other peers in order to understand class materials.

You know what would be really cool? To have 4 or 5 people come in on the same day and we could have roundtable discussions. The lecturers were great, but I learn better in more intimate situations.

The content analysis paper triggered a world of questions and interest for me. It was something real that had obvious implications, and I really learned a lot from it. It continues to shape my thinking.

Section discussion was often very valuable, we came up with and discussed numerous concepts there we couldn't really address in lecture. Also, the guest speakers were very informative.

I enjoyed the variety of writing assignments, especially the media user interview. It was a great way to engage in the process of media analysis. Guest speakers – especially those that “video-conferenced” in – were excellent.

Lectures were engaging. Guest speakers – MTV video director, Peggy Charren, woman from WGBH, gave interesting and unique perspectives on the business. I really learned a lot from section presentations. Readings were generally interesting and helpful.

The lectures and guest speakers were most valuable for me. I especially enjoyed the guest speakers because I found their perspectives to be very insightful.

The guest speakers were varied and helpful. The readings covered so much information it's been transformative in terms of my knowledge and thinking. Written assignments were interesting and valuable. Joe's lectures were engaging and well prepared.

I enjoyed most of the readings which brought concrete perspectives to complex topics. I thought our guest speakers were terrific; their voices added enrichment to the content we studied.

Every guest speaker was fantastic. Every assignment was valuable. Most of the readings (the vast majority) were illuminating. I enjoyed Pattern Recognition. The student presentations were often entertaining, but I felt that was the weakest link of the course; making it was fun and useful, but the quality really varied.

Lectures, section discussions (multi-media presentations).

The media user interview. The TA presentations; their work is dynamic and powerful. Their presentations showcased so many concepts. I liked working with the small group for our presentation – a great chance to collaborate and focus on a small topic. The variety of guest speakers was great, from activist to corporate guru. Very diverse in experience.

All of the guest speakers were fascinating and informative. They helped to bring the real world to our readings and discussions.

The guest speakers really added an interesting level to this course not present in other HGSE courses. The exposure to people in the field and their experiences offered very interesting information on top of the course material. The written assignments were also very challenging (in a good way). They introduced me to new ways of researching and exploring my thoughts.

Discussions were a wonderful opportunity to discuss readings with one another and examine the material we were learning in a highly creative way. Original research projects as well were useful to provide a very hands-on way to process the content of the course as well as pursue to an even greater extent our personal areas of interest, particularly with regard to thinking of potential media effects and where we might take future research studies.

The assignments really helped me to understand better the readings and discussions. Group discussions in section were good. Feedback on assignments was excellent. Guest speakers really gave insight into the industry.

Guest speakers were very valuable and real world applications of the ideas presented in readings and lectures. They were all prominent figures in their fields and amazing opportunities to be able to interact and ask questions of them. Both assignments were great too, and provided me with new skills and understanding.

Guest speakers! (including TF presentations). Written assignments were fun and fascinating, and, of course, I always enjoy watching clips of different kinds of media productions.

The guest speakers were great. It is so helpful to get the firsthand perspective from people in the field. I also thought the written assignments were constructed in a fair, beneficial way. I also loved the student presentations at the end!

The sections were one of the best aspects of the course. They allowed us to share our thoughts and opinion with a small group of peers and also gave us a chance to listen to different perspectives.

I loved the content analysis that Joe had us do. We chose 5 TV programs and analyzed 5 attributes, one of which we were allowed to choose. I realized just how skewed the "reality" of TV is compared to the real world. All guest speakers were great! \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible] Meyers was a very interesting guest as music video director, as was the famous Peggy Charren and Nancy \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible].

Lectures were informative and engaging. Guest speakers provided insider's perspective on various media industries.

The media interview and content analysis assignments were the most valuable to me and I thoroughly enjoyed them. The section discussions and lectures were always provocative.

Our section discussion was engaging and interesting. It was the place we were really able to engage. I very much enjoyed Peggy Charren's visit. She was saucy and opinionated in a way that refreshed the course. Some lectures provided good notes on reading.

The assignments of the content analysis and the interview allowed me to see for myself statistics and data about the issues discussed in class. They allowed me to apply my knowledge and go further with my learning.

The written assignments, though time consuming, really helped me to actually “see” what was out there for children in the media. The assignments, presentations, and lectures provided the vocabulary and fund of knowledge to continue to think about children and the media in the future.

The guest speakers were wonderful. I also found very helpful the emails that spoke about the emphasis or things we should look carefully at in the course readings. These were helpful because sometimes I did not have time to do all the readings. It was helpful to know what the priority in the list of readings was. The different types of assignments allowed me to reaffirm reading concepts, and to narrow the gap between theory and practice.

The readings were great, the lectures and guest speakers were great, and I loved the written assignments/field work for this class. I actually had a good time doing my homework for this class. •

Lectures, readings.

Section discussions were the best because of the chance to really personally dig into topics.

Sections discussions and guest speakers – all wonderful! Presentations.

The written assignments were great because they allowed for simple field work. Guest speakers, especially Kathy Waugh and Nancy Cantor.

Discussions – group and those led by Joe. Groups became friendly very quickly in comparison to student interactions in other classes. The video conferences! The readings – though there was A LOT. The written assignments were also stimulating and unique though “difficult” logistically for those of us in the dormitory.

Thursday discussions were always interesting. The lectures given by the TFs on their own work were fabulous! Joe’s lectures were also interesting. Other guest lectures were also great.

Guest speakers. I learned a lot from the written assignments, putting theories into practice.

Readings were all interesting and useful. Guest speakers were great. I also really enjoyed class presentations of media – should do more of these.

**2b. In what ways does this course introduce and encourage consideration of diversity and/or diverse perspectives? (Consider content and process.)**

Section meetings were most valuable to encourage diversity of opinion, although sometimes it didn't feel like heartfelt diversity; perhaps there should be encouragement to explore material from a "devil's advocate" point-of-view" or "informal debates" about material, as part of class.

Joe brings in so many different speakers and exposes us to a massive variety of media.

It has some comparative bent, but I think the sidebar political comments are sometimes unnecessary. They don't add to the value of the course but yet assume everyone is on board. I've noticed that a lot around Harvard, so maybe it's a result of the location.

Discussion sections encourage us to give our own perspectives on readings and class lectures.

Through the readings concerning ethnicity, gender and sexuality in the media. It was particularly interested when applied to the paper assignments.

It addressed depictions of race, class and gender in the media, as well as how different groups are affected by television.

Diverse points of view were presented and how different media affect different ethnic and age groups was explored.

Covers diversity in all forms effectively. Student presentations; speakers; readings.

We are given freedom to choose some portion of our assignments, to choose an attribute or idea that we are personally interested in and want to investigate further.

We discussed and students facilitated discussions topic each week.

Many of the readings dealt with stereotypes that are problematic within media. Class highlighted many points concerning deficiencies in diversity across all media forms.

It talks about gender in the media, race in the media, class, etc. I like that it presents facts and data, rather than over emotional clichés. One thing though ...I was surprised to learn that minorities are actually over-represented in the media as a percentage of the US population, yet the data is still interpreted as "Oh, no, there are more whites than on-whites on TV." Though Joe is good about it and doesn't overreact to these sensitive issues.

(no comments)

Through the readings, the discussions that were prompted by Joe and the TFs and addressed in lecture.

We were constantly discussing diversity in meaning, though did not delve deeply into diversity with regard to media other than TV.

We considered various people's points of view; read about cultures I have never heard of before (like Otaku) and had the opportunity to interview young people to get their perspective.

(no comments)

Through the readings and discussions we looked at all perspectives on a variety of subjects.

In many ways; this course exposed me to great studies and literature on multicultural issues, under-representations of minorities, etc.

I believe that both from a scholarly perspective – helping us see different schools of thought – and from a cultural/racial perspective, we analyzed media from more than one lens.

Be reviewing how blacks/minorities view media. Content/shows on TV → (how few they are in society).

The entire perspective of media as broken down into realms: computer/internet, games, IM, websites; like that we took apart a category like Life Online and gave it so much credence in a young person's life.

We study media effect across cultures/race/social class/etc. We take into account the diverse population that the media world encompasses, and also how it may become homogeneous through Gerbner's Cultivation Theory.

The readings, lectures, and discussions very much encouraged analysis on many levels and from many perspectives.

A wide variety of diverse perspectives are presented through the readings and elaborated upon during lecture.

Readings and topics looked at many different kinds of diversity: race, gender, sexuality, age. We didn't do as much discussion around these issues as we did reading, though. Assignments allowed us to pursue our own interests.

Readings were very carefully chosen to present often various sides of an issue. Discussions and debate let us synthesize these perspectives and develop our own.

Diversity was one of the major topics of this course. You can't educate through media without first considering the diverse audience.

Ethnicity, gender, age, etc., were a topic of many of our discussions.

The course is very open-ended, while still being guided.

We advocate diversity in the media, and Joe Blatt has shown us how he has contributed through the great pieces that he has created on minorities.

Covers a broad range of research articles. Sections encourage group discussions.

This course is about, mainly, different theoretical perspectives about media. Having the guest speakers also led to diverse perspectives. We studied the effects of media on diverse populations in every sense (gender, ethnicity, age, location, SES).

I can't say that it did, and this for me was one of its greatest lacks. We had a cursory discussion on gender and race, and demographics were often considered, but diverse perspectives were not very evident.

As one reading states, media is assessed as being good where there is the presence and acceptance of adverse group of characters/people (Jordan, 1996). This course presents issues concerning the representation (or lack thereof) of diversity in the media and encourages deep thinking about the implications of media in terms of stereotyping and diversity.

There are open ended assignments that empower students to select a topic of their choice to select or research.

The readings and guest speakers included the perspectives of different people: the programmers, the advertisers, the directors, the parents, the researchers, the children. We talked about media from their different points of view. We talked about multicultural and ethnic issues present in media.

It explores diversity, stereotypes and limitations in the media and also looks at the effects of these issues.

We discussed media from all different cultural, gender, age, etc. perspectives. Chock Full o' Diversity Fun!

It covers a wide range of media issues and gives many viewpoints on each of those specific subjects.

The readings present a diverse wealth of ideas. In discussion, each student has a unique perspective.

Incredible range of diverse perspectives, in particular infused by the work of the teaching fellows.

Diversity was one variable in all our readings, discussions, and written assignments.

There doesn't seem to be a lot of research done specifically on diversity. Although we periodically touched on it, this was not a major issue.

To some extent, the lectures examined diversity. It was a good faith effort, but more could have been done, especially since I know this is an area of interest of the instructor.

Consideration of representation of diversity (or lack thereof) in the media.

### INSTRUCTOR(S)

#### 3a. In what ways was the instructor most effective and why?

Joe is a fantastic lecturer and engaged us in an immersive, media-driven pedagogy. Without a doubt, his control and understanding of media was models to us as a way for teaching and understanding of critical media discourse.

Joe is just fantastic! He has made this class one of the best, if not the best, I have ever taken. He takes the time to really get to know every individual student and puts so much effort into making his classes relevant, stimulating, informative, and enjoyable! He is also so responsive to student needs and offers any help that he can give. I know I will do all I can to take very class he teaches from here on out.

Joe is super enthusiastic and really is interesting in our learning. Most class themes are readily accessible and engaging, largely because of him. He is very willing to help you get involved in other projects and accessible to answer questions, etc., even when he is traveling.

Blatt is a genius! He is by far the best professor I've had this semester. He masterfully combines readings, video clips, student discussions, and guest lecturers into a cohesive unit. He is also very approachable and takes time to help his students and give personal guidance. Brilliant!!

Lectures were well organized and readings were appropriate.

Joe is very engaging and values different perspectives. He also makes himself accessible to students.

Joe is a wonderful lecturer. The classes and discussions are very engaging and even entertaining. He always pushes us to think deeper about media and its effects.

Clearly passionate about topic but very objective which is important in this type of course; leaves lots of room to formulate own ideas. Very well structured and organized – logic of course.

He was a great speaker. He made jokes and led class informally so as to make a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom and making it easy for students to participate in class discussions. Also variety of formats of class – small groups/whole group/guest speakers, etc.

(no comments)

Very engaging, polite, enthusiastic, and very accessible. Class is very well organized and very exciting.

Joe is dynamic and fun. He has amazing charisma. I wish the class was smaller, so we could have more attention from him. The class is WAY too big.

Lively discussions; lots of energy. Well-planned and organize course structure. Great use of website and facilitation of interactions.

Joe is very approachable, he makes lectures enjoyable and interesting.

Great, well-organized lectures. I appreciated Joe's constant consideration of the syllabus and course content – we were never left to guess what he expected. Excellent communication of expectations via email, course website, and written assignment sheets. (So rare in this program)

Joe is terrific. Not only is he knowledgeable, he is a charismatic and understanding professor. I looked forward to coming to his class each week. He was also challenging, but warm and has a good sense of humor.

The PowerPoints were very useful because it really made the material clear. Also, the instructor made the class feel very inviting so that I felt comfortable speaking up in class. He was also very good at feedback and responding quickly to emails. Also, I really am appreciative about how understanding he is about due dates and flexible with timing assignments.

Prof. Blatt's lectures are engaging, well-prepared, and relevant. I always feel like he is sharing something he loves with us, and the excitement about the subject is contagious. I always know he's giving 110% to us, and that encourages me to invest myself in the activities and subject matter. He makes a large class feel like a small discussion group.

Joe's style is efficient and lively. He's thorough and professional in his approach. He also has a great sense of humor and he respects his students. He sets a nice tone for learning.

Joe arranged for excellent speakers, chose great readings and provided detail in his lectures that enhanced their effectiveness (particularly the illustrative clips that peppered his

presentations). He is also very good about including students' voices (the questions and answers with guest was great)!

Extremely easy going, yet didactic; well-versed/adept with teaching multi-media. He delivered material/subject matter in an upbeat fashion. Excellent PowerPoint slides but could not fully absorb them because he went through them too quickly.

He's so well read, well practiced, so knowledgeable and experienced. He uses his connections and brings meaningful speakers into the class; considers issues of class, race, gender, at all times and not in isolation; is very respectful of students, professional, yet warm. He wants to hear us. If you engage him, he'll give you 100%.

Professor Blatt has stimulating lectures, and everything he says/presents to us is directly related to our readings. He gives us the chance to comment on readings, and also encourages group discussions. His supplemental audio-visual material is great, and it reinforces the subject matter we are currently tackling. He speaks clearly and has key point up on PowerPoint. Class is always a pleasure to attend.

The instructor's lectures were always very interesting. His thorough engagement and dedication to the material further entices my involvement as a student. He was also thoughtful in providing guidance to the most important sections/pages of the assigned readings.

In providing us with a great variety of assignments from which to learn and gain hands-on experience, connecting theories and ideas to one another but also encouraging us to think of different and multiple approaches to various issues, allowing for creativity, especially with regard to our final projects.

Joe is a great lecturer, very clear, leads discussions pretty well, brings in a lot interesting material.

Joe is extremely organized. Every lecture was thoughtfully created. He made class interesting through clips and engaging guest speakers. Assignments guided us with a lot of structure which was great. His obvious sense of humor made the class an enjoyable environment.

Good speaker and very friendly and approachable.

Joe is very accommodating and truly cares about students. He is an expert in the field, but is also quite friendly. He did a great job of providing variety and covering a wide scope of material in a short amount of time.

I was amazed to see how Joe integrated the feedback from previous years into this year's class. He also has an unsurpassed amount of empathy and dedication to his students.

He gives great lectures and is always very kind.

Extremely engaging speaker, with a wealth of experience as both a producer of media and as a researcher.

Joe really gets to know his students, and this helps create a comfortable environment for this course, which is necessary because many topics are controversial.

Joe is a friendly and engaging lecturer, his PowerPoint presentations helped effectively summarize the readings. He is approachable and encouraging.

He was great – always welcomed questions, personal guidance with papers, etc. In general, he was very positive. He always invited students to share their ideas with the group in a very genial manner.

He was up-to-date in this knowledge and reading assignments. He was encouraging, positive, engaging, and supportive. He also provided a well balanced view targeting the topic from many angles.

He was effective by providing examples of the concepts we read or talked about in class; By asking critical thinking questions; By providing graphs and statistics in the PowerPoint presentations; By varying the style of teaching, each class was different. I liked that once, part of the class involved playing videogames because the topic of the day was videogames.

He is a great people-person. He really cares a lot about the students and about making the class interesting. He is my favorite professor I've had so far at HGSE. He is very animated in his lectures and very considerate of students.

Prof. Blatt is so engaging and fun. He makes learning somewhat dull theories entertaining, focuses and useful.

He is very energetic and clearly loves what he's doing. His enthusiasm is infectious.

Good at managing time with a large class. Uses TFs efficiently. Never stays on one thing for too long – exciting classes.

He's a great lecturer. He gives captivating talks during class time and encourages enthusiasm and discussion. My favorite lecturer of HGSE.

Joe is lively, enthusiastic, and a good model for how to teach. His approach and obvious dedication to his craft provide pedagogical instruction.

Well organized. Dynamic/effective lecturer. Passionate about his field. Has a good insider's perspective.

He did a good job responding to mid-point course evaluations and adjusting the course accordingly. The lectures improved somewhat during the second half of the course.

Good clear lectures, excellent knowledge of his subject, always accessible via email for questions, etc.

**INSTRUCTOR(S) continued**

**3b. What recommendations would you make to the instructor to strengthen his or her teaching and/or make the course more valuable? (Consider content, materials, activities, assignments that should be dropped or added, grading procedures, amount and kind of feedback, utilization of TFs, as well as changes in instructor behavior.)**

Emphasize critical analysis of readings, even "if we agree." Provide online discussions for those interested in continuing the conversation.

None. Joe is phenomenal.

Definitely use the TFs more in section. They can offer so much.

None. I wouldn't change anything about this class, except drop the discussion sections. The discussion sections were unhelpful. I did not learn anything during those times.

For some reason the course papers requirements were hard to understand or delineate from the assignment requirement sheets that were handed out. I'm not sure if it was the format of these assignment sheets, but it took a long time to wade through them and figure out just why? I was doing the assignment, and what the main objective and requirements were, especially, the content analysis. Also, tips about interviewing methods would have helped to make a stronger interview.

Get rid of the weekly student presentations in section. We spent way too much time watching video clips instead of actually discussing anything of relevance. I also think this course needs more focus in general, particularly in the readings. There is way too much reading – which is never discussed in section because of those presentations. This is an area that changed quite rapidly and I think the course should catch up. More of a focus on media literacy and education.

Some weeks there seemed to be too much reading. Most of it was very interesting, but the sheer volume often prevented me from giving it as much thought as I would have liked. Also, the last presentation, while fun, seemed a little out of place. I would have rather started thinking more about the final paper earlier than have had to do the last presentation, though they were entertaining!

Always wanted to go deeper in topics we were covering, more discussion and explanation; think issue of time (maybe a full year version?).

Give out examples of the assignment. Often instructions too vague, and it is hard to understand what is expected. If afraid it might stifle creativity, then just post a very creative paper(s) that will inspire everyone to do a great paper.

Make available the PowerPoint slides from the lecture. Have more discussions of the readings.

During section time, it would have been helpful if TFs guided more of the discussion instead of depending on students to run each section. Otherwise, class was run very well, extremely efficient and engaging.

Smaller classes. Also, I wish our papers were graded. I have no idea what my grade is for this course, and this is a matter of anxiety for me. The assessments would be well and good if that's what we got at the end of the term, but we are getting a letter grade, and I'd like to know how I am doing. Keeping students in the dark does not empower them.

All of the reading was valuable, without a doubt. But some of it felt a little repetitive, and I would have appreciated the chance to talk about them in more depth/detail.

Occasionally it was a bit unclear what was in the assignments.

My one suggestion is to either lighten the reading load or make it more integrated. The reading list is impressively thorough, but I didn't always feel that it was applied (meaning – I didn't always feel compelled to read). For sections – if students are to take the lead, make it for only half the time. Not enough TF input and such valuable resources.

Honestly, overall, I wouldn't change much about this class. I would perhaps scale down the reading a little bit; I wanted to do (and did) all of it, but found it overwhelming at times.

The assignments were good, but there were too many major assignments. Perhaps the discussion section presentation could be eliminated because two presentations felt to be a bit much, but I really enjoyed the final in class presentations. I think it might be nice to have smaller section groups because it would feel more comfortable. Also, I would love to have learned more about the process and skills needed to work in the educational media industry. What is it like? Is it super competitive? What types of careers are available? Perhaps this is covered in another class, but I was hoping to learn more about this, so maybe it would be more explicit which course (if any) addresses these issues.

This is absolutely the best course I have ever taken at any institution. Period. I just wish it didn't end after one semester.

Dr. Blatt runs a great course. One source of frustration has been tracking down articles online. I would recommend that he mark more clearly on the syllabus what is online vs. packets vs. books. This is a small thing. Also, consider trimming reading a bit. So many studies after a while makes it difficult to retain and reflect.

Joe should lead an “advanced” section for those with prior knowledge. Often the lectures felt like summaries of the readings. Adjust your approach by either calling on students to explain what we’ve read, or focus your lecture on an applied analysis of the ideas we’ve already read. Sometimes the section meetings were surface-level; particularly when we played the role of one constituent (say, an ad exec) in a discussion about regulation, we didn’t come to any useful conclusions. The best section meeting was the boy vs. girl channel debate, which made us justify our positions!

Post PowerPoint lectures/slides online in website because flipped through them too quickly. Unclear about grading procedures because we’ve not received any letter grades for our work. Content could have been more delved into if topics addressed were decreased (would want more in-depth discussion of topics over course of time). Year-long course would be excellent or simply focus on one medium (television).

Less emphasis in beginning of course on history of TV ... we missed out on stuff at the end. We lost so much time with media literacy and topics at the end of semester. TF sessions could be more about the Tf – she’s brilliant, but we didn’t get to hear her enough.

Um, not much to improve on. It was helpful toward the end when he told us which readings to focus on, because there is A LOT of material to read. So, keep doing that.

I was a little frustrated with the structure/set up of the discussion sections. As two/three students were responsible for presenting/designing activities around the readings for the week, I felt somewhat short-changed from more insightful direction/instruction from the Instructor and Teaching Fellows. While it is important to discuss the material with classmates, our section turned this element more into “group presentations” from those that signed up for the week rather than a more thoughtful, whole-class discussion. Maybe more structure could be provided so that it doesn’t feel like 2/3 students giving a presentation each week.

Although I appreciate the structure provided with our assignments as well as room for innovation, I felt at times restricted by the page length requirement of 5 pages for the first two assignments, as I felt the amount of material to be covered within each assignment exceeded 5 pages. Perhaps consider making the maximum 5-7 pages, if the assignments are to remain the same in terms of requirements.

Include more about computing, internet, and maybe how these media interact with TV viewing. Less large group discussion, more small group discussion. Presentations earlier in the term → it was cool to see work of other people in class, but it felt like

now it's too late. Always send out those reading summaries well in advance. They were helpful. Give assignments earlier, and make instructions more clear and concise.

Feedback was a bit frustrating because while thoughtful, did not really provide an idea of how we're doing. Joe's attention to mid semester evaluations was great, and he began providing guidance and framing on readings. This was very helpful.

If anything, less readings.

I would like to have had more discussion in lectures and an section. Even in our sections, sometimes discussion was limited because of the nature of the classmates presenting/leading each section.

A bit more definition in the assignments would be nice.

N/A

Could devote more time to video game media.

I thought the course was wonderful and ended on an extremely high note. So, I would stick to the changes he made after the mid-course evaluation.

While engaging, I felt lectures often summarized readings, rather than questioning them or provoking dialogue. And while kind, I felt Joe wasn't so interested in hearing alternate perspectives and more in continuing the trajectory of his plan. I felt we spent far too much time on younger children's TV habits, and never touched the values behind the surveys (white, middle class, two-parent-household norms).

The only thing I would say is that there was a lot of reading, which was hard to accomplish with all of my other school work. So, maybe just cut that down in some ways.

I definitely think there should be a class and readings on the dark, dark side of media (i.e. TV, computers, and the potential risks). I felt that this was not addressed seriously enough.

Send the class emails where you explain a little bit of the readings and the parts of the readings that we should focus on or pay attention to.

I really don't have any suggestions. I thought the class worked well.

More time on movies, less on TV. Maybe collaborate on the interview assignment. Give letter grades.

More evaluation of readings rather than summaries of readings would be a better use of lecture time. It's our responsibility to have read it already.

Nothing. Well done.

I wouldn't change a thing. I adored this class.

No particular recommendations.

At times the readings were a bit too much, but they were also interesting and relevant.

As seen in the last lecture of the course, the majority of students were interested in teen education, but that field was noticeably absent from the course.

More discussion of content analysis process prior to that assignment.

#### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

**4. To help prospective students choose wisely, what advice would you give to students who are thinking of taking this course (about its level, the amount of work required, any prior training needed, ways to get the most out of the course, etc.)?**

Fantastic, immersive course with moderate workload – well worth the effort. No prior training, but background in production is valuable. Read and think about the readings – they're fantastic.

Take this class! Chances are, it will be the best one you've ever taken. The assignments and readings are all very manageable and fair. Truly, it is a pleasure.

Papers were somewhat challenging because I had never done a content analysis or interview research prior to this. Introduction to media and media theory that covers a wide range of topics and ages.

The work level required is perfect. Though the readings are extensive, they are interesting and needed for the course. In addition to the readings, I've also enjoyed the video clips and discussion boards online. Take this course! It's a great introductory course. Blatt is brilliant!

This is an excellent class that I recommend to anyone who is interested in media or just the way kids are behaving with media. There is a lot of time that goes into papers, but if you pace yourself it's fine. One point though, TFs grade papers according to very strict guidelines, so make sure you cover all points in a paper assignment!

Although I enjoyed the lectures, I'm not sure that I got much from the course besides a very basic understanding of cultivation and social learning theory. Only take this class if you are interested in how pre-schoolers learn from WGBH productions – there's a heavy focus on that.

There is a lot of reading. Decide what interests you most and focus your efforts on learning about that topic.

This is a great course if you want to get an overview and a scan of media and media issues in children's education; will provide access to some of the key \_\_\_\_\_ [illegible] research, give you a sense of competing perspectives and practice analysis skills. Could readily help formulate themes in media for more detailed study, analysis.

Need access to one child for interview but they offer help if needed. Not too many readings and they are all mostly interesting (and can often skip a few without problems). Enjoyable course.

The four assignments which includes the final paper are spread apart fairly well. However, they do take a lot of time. The readings are important to each week's lecture/discussion so keeping up with them is important. There's a lot of reading and the course pack plus books were very costly, over \$150.

Course readings are very manageable, both in difficulty and volume. Guest speakers are very interesting and relevant. Papers and project are very relevant to class (however, doing research does take time and effort).

This class has a very reasonable workload... not too much, not too little. You can't blow it off, but it doesn't swamp you. It is the perfect balance.

This course will cover a lot, but not in great depth. It is an enjoyable class that felt like a survey of media. There is a lot reading and time-consuming paper topics requiring outside work, but it's worth it. The more you put in, the more you get out.

There is a lot of reading but most of it is interesting if you have an interest in the subject to begin with.

Great course – very fun – and low stress. You will definitely work, but not excessively.

This is one of the best courses I have ever taken. It is challenging and a lot of work, but if you are interested in teaching media studies or working in the field, you must take this class. The professor is outstanding. I highly recommend this class.

I loved this class. It was one of my favorites this semester. Dr. Blatt is a wonderful teacher, very friendly and very knowledgeable. Even if you don't have experience in this field, it is a great introduction. I highly recommend it.

Because the subject matter is so interesting and the material is presented in an engaging way, the course flies by. There are many readings – probably the most of any course for me this semester – but they all feel useful and relevant.

This is good for anyone who wants to get a better understanding of the effects of media on our culture. The power of media continues to grow, so a critical exploration in this area will only help, whether you're an educator, a parent, or a leader in an organization.

This is a great class that requires no prior training and a workload that is manageable. Unfortunately, HGSE does not offer an advanced version of this course, but there is enough great material to keep everyone learning. Excellent guests and fun assignments.

Introductory / no training. Work's reasonable. Find a good TA to facilitate discussions because not much done in lecture class.

Joe can be intimidating because of his knowledge and expertise. Make an appointment to discuss something specific – he's brilliant and warm. Get to have a one on one conversation with him. If you are unclear about assignment guidelines, ASK – there's a lot to take in.

If you have any interest in how the media affects children/teens/people in general, this course is fabulous, but especially if your career will be dealing with developing media of your own. This is the kind of class that you'd kick yourself for missing a day of lecture/presentation. Every class was eye-opening and engaging → highly, highly recommended. It's a lot of work, BUT, it's all interesting work, and though you may not be sure of its purpose while you're doing it (content analysis, for example), it becomes clear and beneficial as time goes on.

The readings are interesting, and the lectures are always thoughtful and engaging. Guest speakers also add a fascinating dimension to the class.

The course is well suited for those who enjoy learning about a wide range of topics through reading, lecture, and discussion and by engaging a variety of assignments.

This is a great course if you're interested in media, but if not, don't take it for a grade – it's a lot of reading, and the assignments are pretty time consuming. I'm not interested in media professionally, but I feel I learned a lot and I really enjoyed the class.

Workload is manageable. Reading is heavy but very interesting. Be "ok" with uncertainty in assessment of your work!

It's a great class, but there's a lot of work involved, including a huge amount of readings.

There is a lot of reading in this course. I did not find all of it helpful. However, the workload is still quite manageable. The assignments are moderate and well-spaced, and this helps to offset all of the required readings.

This is a great class. Take it!

There were approximately 4 major assignments in this class, all of which were pleasurable. There is no need to worry about this class being too much of a burden. Although there is a lot of reading and so forth, the class is always a good time.

Work assigned is average and appropriate. Excellent introduction to media research, but may be repetition at times for those with an existing background in the subject area.

All you really need for this course is an interest in children and the media. There is a lot of reading, so you might want to form a study group to make outlines. All the assignments are fun to complete, and they will teach you about the media in many ways. This has been my favorite course so far at HGSE.

This course is misrepresented by its description; media literacy is an afterthought, stuck in at the last meeting – and although it claims “growing up in a media world” it rests heavily on preschool television (5 weeks of it). It is helpful as a broad survey (particularly if you’re interested in TV), but doesn’t go deep, or have time for multiple perspectives.

This is an excellent course. It requires an average amount of coursework, which is all very interesting. I did not have any prior training in the media and I felt comfortable. Definitely take this class.

This work is time consuming but do-able. If you’re interested in gaining a good foundation in re: to children and the media, I recommend this class.

The amount of readings is hard to manage. You have to be very organized, but it is feasible. The class dynamics are great. You will have a lot of fun learning. The assignments are good, because you can put in practice what you read or see in class. All the assignments are different.

This class requires a lot of reading (a little heavier than the average class at HGSE), but the reading is very interesting and worthwhile. Also, written assignments are much more fun and interactive than most other classes. This class was my favorite class I took this semester. I found it very interesting.

The assignments were deceptive. They seemed all fun and, dare I say, easy but then you start to work on them and you realize how hard they are! Don’t be fooled. To get the most out of the course, really understand the theories presented in the first few weeks of class.

Excellent overview course about children and the media. A great springboard into other topics in this area.

A must-take-course if you are interested in media and its effects on children/teens.

I would recommend this course not just to the students but all HGSE colleagues to broaden their perspective. Whether your goals are to be a teacher, a parent, an advocate, or a producer of media, this course offers priceless opportunities for learning.

There is a lot of reading and the assignments take careful planning over time. Can't wait until the last minute! Bring curiosity about the course title and sprinkle it liberally with an open and relaxed attitude and you'll really enjoy this course.

A great class if media, particularly TV, and its effect on children interest you. It focuses a lot on younger kids, but through the papers you have the ability to make the class what you want.

This course is great if you are interested in media studies and the intersections with education. It is rather general, though, so think of it as an introduction.

An interesting course – good survey. You won't get into a great deal of detail in any one area but you will be exposed to an interesting variety of topics in media, educational media, etc.