Contemporary Theory and Research in Globalization

Prof. Rodney Benson
Room 551-A, Pless Annex
Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, NYU
239 Greene Street, NYC 10003
E-mail: rdb6@nyu.edu
Telephone: 212/992-9490
Office Hours:

Course Description
This course seeks to cover the landscape in contemporary theorizing and research on cultural globalization. It is organized broadly around three partially competing/partially complementary theories of globalization – homogenization, enduring cultural differences, and hybridization. We will attempt to bring each of these theories to life with case studies of the production, distribution, and reception of cultural forms and experiences from across the globe.

Texts

Books (Available at NYU Bookstore)

Pdf texts: Available on Blackboard under “Course Documents” (indicated in schedule with asterisk).

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Grading for this course will be based on your performance on the following:

(1) Attendance and In-Class Presentations (20 percent): Come to class, on time, and be prepared to discuss the assigned readings. All students will help present at least two of the readings.
(2) Research Paper (80 percent): In this theoretically-framed empirical paper of 20-25 pages, you will conduct primary research on globalization and media. A detailed research prospectus will be due midway through the semester, and all topics must be approved by the professor. To emphasize: Your paper must include some form of primary research, such as content analysis of media texts/images, surveys, in-depth interviews, or ethnography. (Style guidelines: Use staples, not paper clips or plastic covers. Double-space. Number your pages. Use a formal style manual for citations.)

**Academic Integrity**
All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available [here](#).

It should go without saying that plagiarism is strictly prohibited. This policy will be strictly enforced.

“Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated. Plagiarism is failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score and/or other materials which are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following: Copy verbatim from a book, an article or other media; Download documents from the Internet; Purchase documents; Report from other’s oral work; Paraphrase or restate someone else’s facts, analysis and/or conclusions; Copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you.” (NYU Steinhardt School of Education Statement on Academic Integrity)

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, 719 Broadway, 2nd Floor, (212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation.

**Schedule**
(subject to revision; readings may be added or subtracted; *=articles or excerpts from books available on Blackboard):

**WEEK 1**
Three Theories of Globalization: Homogenization, Enduring Differences, and Hybridization
Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture*, chs. 1 and 3

**WEEK 2**
Cultural or Media Imperialism
*Mattelart and Dorfmann, How to Read Donald Duck* (excerpts)
*McChesney, ‘The Media System goes Global’*
*Serra, ‘The killing of Brazilian street children’

WEEK 3
Digital and Other Media Divides
*Norris, ‘The Digital Divide’
*Sreberny-Mohammadi, ‘The Global and the Local in International Communications’
*Spitulnik, ‘Mobile Machines and Fluid Audiences...Zambian Radio Culture’

WEEK 4 *Paper Prospectus DUE Beginning of Class*
Audience Interpretations and Experiences of Global Media
*Katz and Liebes, ‘Decoding Dallas’
*Gitlin, *Media Unlimited* (excerpts)
*Fantasia, ‘Fast Food in France’

WEEK 5
Globalization and Internet: Public Sphere, Global Village, or Network Society?
*Dahlgren, ‘The Public Sphere and the Net’
*Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (excerpts)
*Bennett, ‘New Media Power: The Internet and Global Activism’
*Russell, ‘Zapatistas Online’

WEEK 6 *Research Paper Consultations*
Persistent Differences: Clash of Civilizations
*Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilizations?’
*Mahbubani, ‘The Dangers of Decadence’
*Ajami, ‘The Summoning’
*Huntington, ‘Response: If Not Civilizations, What?’
*Barber, *Jihad v. McWorld* (excerpts)

WEEK 7
How States Matter
*Morris and Waisbord, *Media and Globalization: Why the State Matters* (excerpts)
*Kit-wai Ma, ‘Rethinking media studies: The case of China’
*Curran and Park, ‘Beyond globalization theory’, introduction to *De-Westernizing Media Studies*

WEEK 8
Comparative Media Systems: Methods and Normative Theories
Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems*, chs. 1-4
WEEK 9
Comparative Media Systems: Descriptive and Explanatory Approaches
Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form.*
*Kevin G. Barnhurst and John Nerone. 2001. Chapters 1, 6, 8, and excerpts from *The Form of News: A History.*

WEEK 10: U.S./Western European Comparisons
Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems,* chs. 5, 6, 7

WEEK 11: Other News Media Systems and the Question of Convergence
Hallin and Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems,* “The Forces and Limits of Homogenization” and “Conclusion.”

WEEK 12
National/Regional Differences Exported: Contra-Flows
*Rogers and Antola, ‘Telenovelas: A Latin American Success Story’
*Rosin, ‘Life Lessons: How soap operas can change the world’
*Thottam, ‘A Telenovela Revolution’
*Biltereyst and Meers, ‘The international telenovela debate...’
*Straubhaar, ‘Distinguishing the global, regional and national levels of world television’

**WEEK 13**

**Hybridization**

Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture*, chs. 4-6
*Lee, ‘The absorption and indigenization of foreign media cultures’
*Shim, ‘Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia’
*Ganti, ‘“And Yet My Heart is Still Indian” ...’

**WEEK 14**

**Hybridization (cont.)**

Kraidy, *Hybridity*

**WEEK 15 ** **FINAL PAPER DUE in Professor’s Mailbox**

**Cosmopolitanism**

Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*
*Hannerz, ‘Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture’*