

EXP 52CF: PR and Marketing: Unraveling the Spin

Fall 2014, Gail Bambrick

617-627-2117, gail.bambrick@tufts.edu

Using a little psychology, a pinch of sociology, a smidge of anthropology, some cognitive analysis, and a bit of marketing strategy, this class will analyze how carefully manipulated events and media can mold our thinking. We will look at the ingredients professionals use to decide a Presidential election, repair the reputation of BP after the Gulf oil spill, and make more people buy Hondas than Kias, or choose Coke over Pepsi.

Primarily using case studies, this course will look at the history of public relations and marketing in the US and how it evolved in parallel with our media environment. We will explore how the mechanics of this global mega industry create strategies that influence complex world affairs or simply the toothpaste we use. We will analyze advertising, marketing communications, images and visual design, and public relations campaigns and how these affect our psychology.

Required readings available in the bookstore are:

All Marketers are Liars, Godin

Propaganda, Edward Bernays

The Image, Daniel Boorstin

Media Control, Noam Chomsky

Toxic Sludge is Good for You, John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton

PR! A Social History of Spin, Ewen

Essential McLuhan, McLuhan

Marketing Metaphoria, Zaltman

In addition there will be readings on the Trunk site

Guest speakers from the industry, now being scheduled, will share their thoughts. Each class will involve ad/campaign analyses. Students will work in teams on a final project to solve a PR/marketing challenge by creating their own ads, messages and strategic plan. This project, along with one written mid-term analysis will determine the course grade.

Class sessions:

Sept. 3: Introduction: What this class will cover, general overview of concepts through ad analysis.

Sept. 10: *All Marketers Are Liars*, Seth Godin: What is advertising and marketing and what are its tactics. **Choose projects and teams**

September 17: *Propaganda*, Edward Bernays; *PR! A Social History of Spin*, Stuart Ewen, Chapt. 1. Who was the father of PR and what does he tell us about what public relations is? **How to define a product.**

Sept. 24: *The Image*, Daniel Boorstin, Intro and Chapt. 1: How can we navigate our media environment? **What is a SWOT analysis.**

Oct. 1: *The Image*, Chapt. 2&5: How does the media environment change us? **Audience analysis.**

Oct. 8: *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, Stauber and Rampton: **Student teams choose one chapter from Chapt. 3-10 and present an analysis of the case. Graded assignment – 5-page written analysis from team. Competitive analysis.**

Oct. 15: *Marketing Metaphoria*, complete. **Competitive Analysis**

Oct. 22: *PR!*, All of Part 3 (pp.131-212). *PR!*, Chapt. 3, 4, &5. **How to create a strategy.**

Oct. 29: *Media Control*, Noam Chomsky. **Discussion of tactics.**

Nov. 5: The visual and postmodern: Articles from Trunk site: *Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman, *The Image World*, Sontag; *Faking it*, Sanes; *Advertising and Post Modernism*, Sanes; Postmodernism, Klages; *Negotiable Realities*, David Whillock. **Project work.**

Nov. 12 *Essential McLuhan*, Eric McLuhan: Part II, Chapt. 7-10; Chapt. 19, “The Laws of Media,” pp. 366-388. **Project work**

Nov. 19: **Class team presentations**

Nov. 26: No class – Thanksgiving break

Dec. 3: Class team presentations