

Media and Deaf History—H-332  
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Office Hours

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

This is an historical survey of the mass media (print, film, and television) as sources and interpreters of deafness and deaf people within the context of US social and cultural history. This class also will examine historical changes in the products of mass media within the deaf community and offer ways of critiquing media sources.

**Required text:** Schuchman, Hollywood Speaks. Champaign, Ill: U Ill P., 1999.  
Allen and Gomery, Film History: Theory and Practice. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.

Supplementary reading: Gannon, Deaf Heritage (1981);  
Martin Norden, Cinema of Isolation (1994)  
Maltin, Movie and Video Film Guide (any recent edition)  
Klobas, Disability Drama in Film and Television (1988)  
Steven J. Ross, Movies and American Society  
Thomas Sobchack, Vivian C. Sobchack, An Introduction to Film  
John e. O'Connor, Image as Artifact  
Peter C. Rollins, ed. Hollywood as Historian  
Robert Sklar, Movie-Made America  
Silent News  
Disability Rag  
Any general American History textbook.

**Requirements and Grades:**

1. Class Participation. You are expected to attend every class and to be prepared for discussion. This also includes written homework assignments and required film viewing.(25%)
2. A three to five page (minimum) research paper (endnotes and bibliography) in which you address an issue or controversy or importance to the Deaf community during one decade (ten year period) based on your reading of Deaf community newspapers/magazines.(15%)
3. A four to six page (minimum) research paper in which you describe films/television programs produced from 1970-2000 which depict deafness or deaf people. (at least five different examples). Compare your thesis to Schuchman's in *Hollywood Speaks*.(25%)
4. Class presentation on your project. (10%)
5. Summaries of 3 classic films (5%)
6. One take-home midterm exam on Media and Deaf history to 1960s. (20%)

Note: I will offer regular viewings of classic films covering various time periods and genres. Undergraduate students are required to see 3 of these films. If you are unable to attend the viewings, you may ask for the list of recommended films to see on your own. You may be asked to incorporate these films into your written assignments.

**Class schedule** (subject to change\*\*)

8/31 Who's who; course introduction;

- Homework: Place of Their Own, Chap. 9; Deaf History Unveiled, Chap 11
- 9/2 Deaf and print media/research with Lpfs  
Homework: Gomery, Chap. 2
- 9/6 **First Project Topic Due BY NOON**
- 9/7 “Reading films” and Research: types of historical approach; issues in film history  
Homework: Gomery, chap. 3
- 9/9 Sources: issues. How do you find information? Use of Motion Picture Encyclopedia, American Film Institute Index, NY Times Film Reviews, lpf, disability studies and deaf studies literature.  
Homework: Schuchman, Chap. 1
- 9/14 Silence is Golden: The Silent Movie Era; NAD collection film  
Homework: Handout (NAD films); NAD assignment (*Sign Language Studies* Special Issue (Spring 2004) )
- 9/16 NAD films  
Homework: Homework: Schuchman, Chap. 2
- 9/21 Silence into Sound: Talkies and conflicting views of deafness;  
Homework: work on project
- 9/22 **First Research Paper Due by noon**
- 9/23 His Busy Hour: view and critique  
Homework: Schuchman, Chap. 3
- 9/28 Changing images of Deafness, 1948-1969  
Homework Johnny Belinda or Heart is a Lonely Hunter  
(on reserve) and critique
- 9/30 intro: Assessing popular films; assessing community films  
Homework: Ethnic Notions, (on reserve) and handout (Ross, Chap. 9)
- 10/5 **Film/TV Project Topic Due**  
Film as a mirror: stereotypes; Birth of a Nation: Race and Films;  
Homework: Norden sections and response
- 10/7 Other bodies and film: Celluloid Closet  
Homework: Sobchack handout: genres (Chap. 5)
- 10/8 **Midterm Exam Due by noon**
- 10/12 Genres of films  
Homework: Allen and Gomery, Chap. 7, sections Gomery, 9
- 10/14 Social history and film; intro to documentary

- Homework: Handout, Connor: news films and documentary
- 10/19 **ENRICHMENT DAY**-work on source list, viewings
- 10/21 **Source list for Film/TV project due**  
Practice session: TBA  
Homework: Moving Pictures, Moving Hands: The Story of Earnest Marshall or 2)  
Charles Krauel, Deaf Filmmaker
- 10/26 group session: comparing documentaries  
Homework: Schuchman Chap. 4, TBA: Manix: Silent Cries, Deaf Mosaic
- 10/28 Television; Deaf actors appear; Intro: Love is Never Silent  
Homework: Schuchman, Chap. 5
- 11/2 conclude: Love is Never Silent  
Homework: Children of a Lesser God, handout
- 11/4 The Matlin Era: biography  
Homework: TBA—Matlin sections; Schuchman, Conclusion
- 11/9 Marlee Matlin: impact?  
Homework: DPN, individual primary source handouts
- 11/11 DPN and the media  
Homework: TBA (Haller, print media; primary source work: NYTimes index)
- 11/16 Into the 90s: print  
Homework: Sklar, Hollywood in the 1980s and 1990s (Chap. 20-1) handout; Ross, Chap. 11 handout
- 11/18 Mainstreamed?: Hollywood film in the 1980s and 1990s  
Homework: TV assignments
- 11/22 Film/TV project draft due by noon**
- 11/23 into the 90s: television  
Homework: enjoy break
- 11/24- 11/28 **THANKSGIVING BREAK--NO CLASS**
- 11/30 Into the 90s: film: overview  
Homework: “Compensation” (Michelle Banks)
- 12/1 Film/TV Project Due by noon**
- 12/2 Independent Films  
Where to next?: the issues of Deafness and the media  
Homework: prepare presentations

12/7 **Presentations**

12/9 **Presentations and wrap up**