

Call for Papers

Teachers, Teaching and the Media: Practices of Pedagogy from Social Media to the Cineplex

Transdisciplinary Conference on Media and Education

October 16-18, 2014

Saint Mary's College of California

Moraga, CA (20 minutes east of Berkeley in the San Francisco Bay Area)

The Teachers, Teaching and the Media conference will focus on representations of teachers and education in film, television, and digital/social media and the theory and practice of media-based pedagogy in the classroom. With this intersecting emphasis on representations and practices, we are looking for papers and presentations that critically examine the cultural and historical representations of teachers, students, and the educational setting as well as those that look at the ways that films, television, and digital media open up possibilities for new forms of teaching and learning within formal or informal educational contexts (the college, school, living room, or Cineplex).

Movies and television have a long tradition of taking school life and teachers as subjects for their narratives. These narratives have circulated powerful, though often reductive, representations of teachers and have influenced our sense of what meaningful educational experiences are supposed to look like. Such representations shape our understanding of the dynamics of teacher-student relationships and the roles (positive and negative) that teachers play in the lives of students and the larger community. In short, the media have become unlikely authoritative texts on what counts as good education. But have the stories that films (and other media) tell about teachers become so formulaic that other more complex and realistic stories are unavailable to us in the popular culture?

In addition, as media come to increasingly dominate discussions of educational policy and practice, what contributions can film, television, social media, videogames and such bring to bear upon classroom pedagogy? Can education as an institution engage, better yet resist, the entertainment culture that defines public discourse in contemporary society? How has increased media literacy changed the common knowledge and skills that students bring with them to school? Panels will explore how the media continue to transform pedagogy within historical, cultural, social, and educational frameworks – from the first uses of radio in the early 1920s to the most recent experiences with social media and the rise of MOOCs.

Conference organizers understand issues surrounding the use of media in education as closely linked to the representations of teachers on the screen. This conference will be an opportunity for those who work with the media in the classroom to discuss ideas with those who research representations of the classroom in the media.

Proposals

Conference organizers invite paper and panel proposals from a range of disciplines (education, film studies, media and cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, English, American studies, communication, etc.) and theoretical positions (psychoanalysis, Marxism, critical race theory, cybernetics, poststructuralism, media ethnography, critical pedagogy, media archaeology, etc.). We are open to a wide variety of topics and approaches and welcome presentations that incorporate expanded forms of scholarship. Some possible questions include:

- How has Hollywood represented teachers (as heroes and saints) and students (as hooligans and lost souls)? How has it treated racial and ethnic issues in education? How has it represented gender in the school?
- How should media be used in the classroom? How should it not be used?
- How have cultural representations of teachers and teaching changed over time? How does, for example, the model of the good or beloved teacher change in films over the decades leading up to the current conjuncture?
- How are teachers and teaching depicted in world cinema and global media? How has transnationalism and the flows of capital influenced the discourse on education in national contexts?
- How have innovative ideas in educational and media theory driven the agenda for the use of media and media-based technologies in primary, secondary, and higher education?
- In what ways have the cinema's depiction of teaching and schools informed the public's view of the education system and, in particular, the teaching profession? How have these representations driven policy around public versus private funding for higher education?
- How do MOOCs, online learning, social media, and the automation of instruction enhance or threaten the popular and professional mission of pedagogy and learning?

Please send proposals of 250-500 words and a short bio statement to teachmedia@stmarys-ca.edu by January 10, 2014. Submitted proposals will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee comprised of scholars from relevant fields. Acceptance of papers will be announced in March 2014.

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