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Homework 2

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Homework #2

Gender, Sexuality, Socialization and the Media

Due Thursday November 5 in class. This assignment is worth 10% of your grade.

In the last several weeks we have examined three different documentaries on gender, sexuality, socialization and the media—*Tough Guise*, *Consuming Kids*, and *the Celluloid Closet*. In this homework assignment you will take the main thesis of each documentary about masculinity in cinema, gender in sports media coverage, or gay visibility in movies and compare your own observations of the media with one thesis. You should pick one of the following topics and produce a 3-4 page essay on your results.

1). *Masculinity in the Media*. The argument made in *Tough Guise* is that masculinity on the cinematic screen has changed dramatically in the last 30 years, since the early 1980s. If you choose this topic, you will compare an action film of the same genre made in the 1980s with a film made in the last 10 years. Specifically, you can choose one of the following two comparisons or arrange with the instructor for a different topic:

James Bond films

In the 1980s—*Octopussy*, *A View to a Kill*, *The Living Daylights*

Current—*The World is Not Enough*, *Die Another Day*, *Casino Royale*, *Quantum of Solace*

Batman films

In the 1980s—*Batman* (Tim Burton director, 1989)

Current—*The Dark Knight*, *Batman Begins*

In your response essay you should address whether or not there are changes in masculinity of the main and supporting characters between the 1980s and more recent version of the film. Does the thesis of *Tough Guise* about the changing nature of masculinity hold true?

2) *Consuming Kids*. The video *Consuming Kids* suggest that advertising for adult products (e.g., vacations, cars, etc) is increasingly directed at children, reflecting a larger culture of materialism and consumption. In your brief study, you should watch television targeted at children (cartoons, shows on children's networks like Nickelodeon), and examine 20 commercials targeted at children. Your response paper should compare those commercials you examine with the claims of the documentary, *Consuming Kids*.

3) *Gays and Lesbians in Film*. The video *The Celluloid Closet* claims that gay, lesbian and bisexual coverage in movies is oftentimes used as a source of humor, pity or fear. Your essay will evaluate whether or not these claims are true on television by watching 4 episodes of a television show that includes a gay, lesbian or bisexual character. Evaluate the role that this gay,

lesbian or bisexual character plays in your television show and whether or not they are used as a source of humor, pity or fear. Your essay should compare what you find with the reading by Josh Gamson on talk shows.