



Media Messages: What Film, Television, and Popular Music Teach Us About Race, Class, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

By Linda Holtzman, Leon Sharpe



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The new edition of this widely adopted book reveals how the popular media contribute to widespread myths and misunderstanding about cultural diversity. While focused on the impact of television, feature film, and popular music, the authors reach far beyond media to explore how our understanding, values, and beliefs about race, class, gender and sexual orientation are constructed. They analyze how personal histories, combined with the collective history of oppression and liberation, contribute to stereotypes and misinformation, as well as how personal engagement with media can impact prospects for individual and social freedom. Along with updated media examples, expanded theories and analysis, this edition explores even more deeply the coverage of race in two chapters, discusses more broadly how men and boys are depicted in the media and socialized, and how class issues have become even more visible since the Great Recession of the 21st century and the Occupy movements. Special activities and exercises are provided in the book and an online Instructor's Manual is available to adopters.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Authors Holtzman and Sharpe quote one of their students: 'Humanity is our basic understanding; compartmentalizing people is something that's taught.' Then, through a thoughtful blend of textual interpretation, self-reflection, social science theory, and cultural analysis, they produce a wonderfully written critique of film, television, and popular music in our time of controversial new laws that open the door to legal discrimination under the guise of standing your ground, eliminating voter fraud, or protecting certain religious beliefs. While not a media literacy book per se, *Media Messages* encourages readers through examples, evidence, and exercises to think critically about media's--and our own--contributions to how we construct our realities of gender, class, race, and sexual orientation." -- Stanley Baran, Professor and Chair, Department of Communication, Bryant University

"The second edition of *Media Messages* is a welcome update to the groundbreaking original. Holtzman and Sharpe's readings of Hollywood movies and popular television shows help the reader understand the pervasiveness of class differences in American culture and make visible the many fault lines that crisscross our society." -- Louis Alvarez, Director of *People Like Us: Social Class in America* (PBS)

"Holtzman provides a comprehensive survey of the major issues framing the ongoing debate regarding the social and cultural implications of the struggles over identity politics in contemporary media. Her approach appropriately combines ideological readings and a detailed examination of everyday life worlds. An important contribution to this evolving literature." -- Hal Himmelstein, Brooklyn College (on the previous edition)

"Countless examples from each genre will resonate in some way for every reader, and questionnaires throughout help individuals explore his or her own values, definitions, beliefs, and perspectives. A vast amount of historical and media research is synthesized into thought-provoking and instructive material. Those with an interest in society and the media will find this quite appealing, and it will serve as an excellent text for college-level communications programs." -- *Library Journal* (on the previous edition)

About the Author

Linda Holtzman, Professor Emeritus at Webster University, has been a leader in media and diversity program development and teaching for 25 years. A weekly guest on the St Louis NBC affiliate, she has reviewed diversity messages in film and television and received grants for her work in the U.S., Israel and Palestine; analyzing media misinformation, stereotypes, and human rights activism. She serves as an anti-racism facilitator for local and national organizations and school districts and has received numerous awards for her work, including the Martin Luther King Award presented personally by Coretta Scott King.

Leon Sharpe is an adjunct professor at the Webster University School of Communications where he teaches courses that examine the role of film and other media in establishing and reinforcing patterns of social power. He is also founder and principal of The Praxis Group, a strategic consulting firm that specializes in building organizational capacity, developing effective leaders, training high-performance teams, leveraging workforce diversity, and managing institutional change. He has successfully designed and implemented employee efficacy and process improvement programs for a broad range of corporations, universities, school

districts, government agencies, charitable foundations, social service providers, and community-based groups.

Joseph Farand Gardner, also known as J. Owl Farand, is a writer and Black Media Analyst for Owl's Asylum and operates the design agency J. Farand, LLC. Mr Gardner attended Ranken technical College in St. Louis where he obtained an Associates Degree of Science in Web Development and graduated from St. Louis' Webster University, earning a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in Media Communications and serving as a Research Assistant to Professor Linda Holtzman.

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