

Film and Media Insights

March 2025

Notable:

- Observation Scheduling to Begin:
03/23/24
- Syllabi Submission Requests to Begin:
03/23/24
- MCF Google Classroom Shell Due:
03/30/24

Focus Topic: Cultural Relevance in Media and Film

Integrating culturally relevant content is crucial to enhancing student engagement and deepening critical understanding in media and film studies. Today's students encounter a diverse media landscape, from streaming services to social media platforms, each offering distinct narratives that shape their perspectives and identities. By connecting classroom instruction to popular media, educators help students critically engage with the content they regularly consume, fostering analytical and cultural literacy skills.

Expanding this approach involves exploring the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, and class within contemporary media and the influence of digital media ecosystems on public discourse.

Encouraging students to consider their personal media experiences and critically assess their consumption habits can lead to richer classroom discussions and enhanced critical thinking skills.

60-Second Biography: Active Listening in Media and Film Classes

The **60-second Biography** is an active listening exercise designed to foster student engagement, community building, and critical listening skills.

Procedure:

- Pair students, allowing each student precisely one minute to share key aspects of their biography related to media experiences, cultural interests, or film preferences.
- After each student speaks, their partner briefly summarizes the biography to the class, highlighting the main points and significant details.

Application in Media and Film Studies: This exercise encourages students to engage with each other's perspectives actively, reinforcing the importance of attentive and critical listening. It also prepares students to engage with diverse viewpoints in media narratives thoughtfully.

Skills Developed:

- Critical and active listening
- Concise communication

- Cultural awareness
 - Community building within the classroom
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Department of Communications & Performing Arts
Media | Film | Music | Speech | Theatre | Journalism



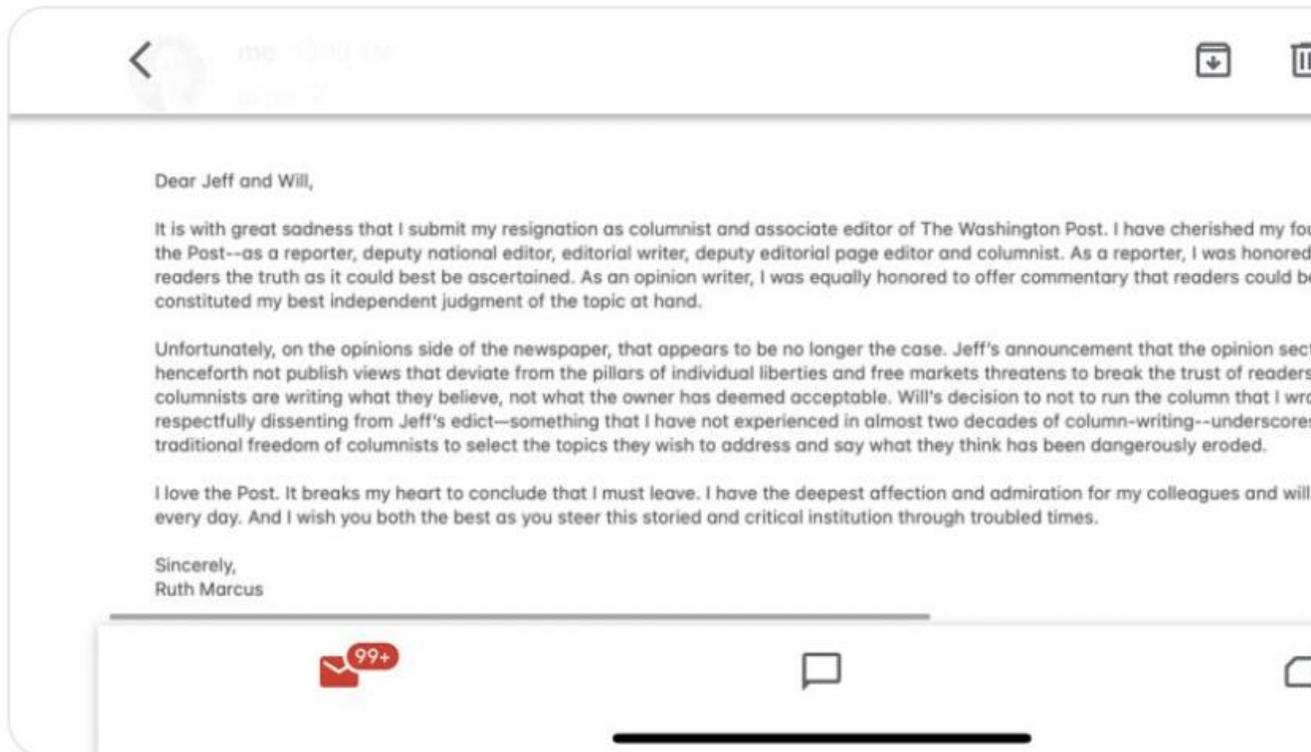
Faculty Contribution Highlight: **Ciro Scardina,** **Edward R. Murrow High School - Mass Media**

↻ Reposted by Sarah Kelly



Ben Mullin @benmullin.bsky.social · 18m

Scoop: Washington Post editor Ruth Marcus says she's res
column on Jeff Bezos's Wall Street Journal-like opinion piv
rejected by Will Lewis



26

↻ 358

♡ 679



Dear Jeff and Will,

It is with great sadness that I submit my resignation as columnist and associate editor of The Washington Post. I have cherished the Post--as a reporter, deputy national editor, editorial writer, deputy editorial page editor and columnist. As a reporter, I was readers the truth as it could best be ascertained. As an opinion writer, I was equally honored to offer commentary that readers constituted my best independent judgment of the topic at hand.

Unfortunately, on the opinions side of the newspaper, that appears to be no longer the case. Jeff's announcement that the opinion henceforth not publish views that deviate from the pillars of individual liberties and free markets threatens to break the trust of columnists are writing what they believe, not what the owner has deemed acceptable. Will's decision to not to run the column to respectfully dissenting from Jeff's edict--something that I have not experienced in almost two decades of column-writing--and traditional freedom of columnists to select the topics they wish to address and say what they think has been dangerously eroded.

I love the Post. It breaks my heart to conclude that I must leave. I have the deepest affection and admiration for my colleagues every day. And I wish you both the best as you steer this storied and critical institution through troubled times.

Sincerely,
Ruth Marcus

With immense sadness I am writing to let you know that I have resigned from The Washington Post, in an email sent this morning to Jeff Bezos and Will Lewis and pasted below. I am taking this step, after more than 40 years at The Post, following Will's decision to spike a column that I wrote expressing concern about the newly announced direction for the section and declined to discuss the decision with me. As I leave, I'd like to emphasize two things. First, how much affection and respect I have for you all, and the terrific, innovative, probing coverage you produce. Second, that my decision reflects what is the right step for me and me alone and does not suggest what anyone else should do in the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

RECOMMENDED LESSON PLAN: Cultural Mirrors— Analyzing Representation in Popular Media/Film"

Objectives:

- Analyze how media shapes and reflects contemporary cultural dynamics and social identities.
- Evaluate representation, stereotypes, and narratives within popular media texts.
- Understand the role of audience engagement and participatory media culture.

Pre-Class Assignment:

- Select and analyze two popular media/film examples and prepare a reflection on how they represent or challenge cultural norms.

In-Class Activities:

- Small Group Discussions: Compare and critique representations within the selected media examples, exploring their impact on different communities and individual perceptions.
- Interactive Media Workshop: Engage in role-play exercises to explore perspectives represented and omitted in mainstream media narratives.

Post-Class Assignment:

- Develop a creative media project (video essay, podcast, or infographic) examining cultural representation in contemporary media and propose ways media producers can foster more inclusive representation.

Skills Developed:

- Critical thinking, cultural analysis, media literacy, creativity, digital literacy.

Current Research & Resources:

Impact of Social Media on Cultural Discourse

Recent studies explore how social media shapes public discourse, including the spread of misinformation, the formation of collective narratives, and public engagement dynamics:

- **Cross-Cultural Engagement with Misinformation:**
Researchers designed social media features to encourage users to challenge false information, finding that willingness to correct misinformation was significantly higher in an Arab cultural context than in the UK
ideas.repec.org
 - *Citation:* Muaadh Noman, Selin Gurgun, Keith Phalp, and Raian Ali. “Designing Social Media to Foster User Engagement in Challenging Misinformation: A Cross-Cultural Comparison Between the UK and Arab Countries.” *Palgrave Communications* 11, no. 1 (2024): 1–13.

- **Cancel Culture, Fake News, and Discourse:** An analysis of contemporary “cancel culture” and online fake news shows the *“intricate relationship between cancel culture and fake news,”* shedding light on their combined impact on public discourse in the platform-driven society.

frontiersin.org

- It examines how misinformation strategies and online shaming practices jointly shape cultural narratives and public opinion. *Citation:* Lucia Picarella. “Intersections in the Digital Society: Cancel Culture, Fake News, and Contemporary Public Discourse.” *Frontiers in Sociology* 9 (2024): 1376049.

- **Collective Storytelling & Cultural Narratives:** A study of a Chinese music streaming platform found that *“autobiographical narratives and negative emotions in user comments significantly boost a song’s influence,”* demonstrating how active audience storytelling amplifies a cultural product’s impact

ideas.repec.org

- This work ties social media commentary to narrative engagement, showing that collective emotional narratives can enhance public engagement with cultural media. *Citation:* Cheng-Jun Wang, Xinzhi Zhang, Zepeng Gou, and Youqin Wu. “Yesterday Once More: Collective Storytelling and Public Engagement with Digital Cultural Products on the Music Streaming Platform.” *Palgrave Communications* 11, no. 1 (2024): 1–10.

Representation and Identity in Global Cinema

Scholars have examined diversity and identity in global cinema, analyzing how films portray different cultures and groups and the impact of these representations on audiences:

- **Measuring Diversity in Hollywood:** A large-scale computational analysis of over 2,300 films (1980–2022) confirms that on-screen representation of women and people of color in Hollywood has increased in the past decade
pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
 - This open-access **PNAS** study also uncovers new patterns in how gender and race are portrayed, illustrating the broader social effects of film diversity. *Citation:* David Bamman, Rachael Samberg, Richard Jean So, and Naitian Zhou. “Measuring Diversity in Hollywood through the Large-Scale Computational Analysis of Film.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 121, no. 46 (2024): e2409770121.
- **National Identity and ‘Otherness’ in Film:** An analysis of Italian Neorealist and modern migrant films shows how characters on society’s margins (e.g., *borgate* dwellers and immigrant women) challenge stereotypes of nationhood and womanhood, reconfiguring ideas of national identity
charitonidou.com
 - By examining narratives of migration and gender, this study illustrates cinema’s role in shaping cultural identity and alterity. *Citation:* Marianna Charitonidou. “Gender and Migrant Roles in Italian Neorealist and New Migrant Films: Cinema as an Apparatus of Reconfiguration of National Identity and ‘Otherness.’” *Humanities* 10, no. 2 (2021): 71.

- **Contemporary Diversity and Inclusion in Cinema:** A recent overview of global film trends discusses the historical underrepresentation of marginalized groups and notes that *“recent years have seen a growing awareness of these issues, leading to concerted efforts to diversify the cinematic landscape.”*
ilacf.shodhsagar.org
 - It highlights how filmmakers strive for more authentic portrayals of various identities and experiences on screen. *Citation:* Ravi Patel. “Representation Matters: Diversity and Inclusion in Contemporary Cinema.” *Shodh Sagar Journal of Language, Arts, Culture and Film* 1, no. 1 (2024): 42–46.

Critical Trends: Film, Media, and The New Culture

1. **Intersectional Representation:** The increasing emphasis on authentic portrayal of diverse identities, focusing on the complexities of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class to reflect a more inclusive society.
2. **Participatory Media Culture:**
Audiences' active engagement in content creation and dissemination through platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Twitch shifts power from traditional media producers to consumers.

3. Virtual Production Techniques:

A filmmaking process integrating virtual reality, augmented reality, and real-time rendering technology, enabling filmmakers to visualize scenes digitally before or during filming, thus reducing costs and expanding creative possibilities.

4. Platform Economy and Media Distribution:

The increasing dominance of streaming platforms (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+) is shaping production, distribution, and consumption patterns and transforming traditional film and television business models.

5. Deepfake Technology and Digital Ethics:

The rise of sophisticated digital manipulation techniques allows realistic yet fabricated video content, prompting ethical debates on misinformation, consent, and digital identity.

6. Environmental and Eco-critical Cinema:

Increased scholarly and creative attention to how film and media narratives address environmental issues, climate change, and sustainability, influencing audience awareness and public discourse.