This course will explore identities and processes in Israeli society as they are constructed in and through the media. We will begin with a survey of the cultural history of the media in Israel: the political economy of their establishment and evolution, their roles in the nation building project, and their distinctive contributions to Israelis' collective memory. We will then shift to explore the mediated representation of various sectors in Israeli society, focusing on ethnic, national, gender, youth and religious identities. Finally, we will look into cultural and political dynamics, asking about the ways in which Israeli media are implicated in such processes as globalization and the transformation of the public sphere; and the ways in which different ideological groups in Israel adopt or resist specific media. The course is based on the assumption that the media play leading roles in the production and maintenance of culture; thus the study of Israeli media offers important insights for the understanding Israeli society.

Course requirements:

Attendance (10%): Students are expected to complete the reading assignments and be prepared to participate in class discussion.

Assignment and class presentation (30%): Analysis of a cultural text that relates to Israel (1,000-1,500 words). Describe the text (20%), discuss its significance (20%), analyze it according to at least three of the perspectives presented in class (40%), express your opinion and make a sound argument based on your analysis (20%).

Texts need to be approved by Sept. 16.

Analyses will be presented in class Nov. 18-25.


Final exam (60%)

Reading:


Schedule:
1. Aug. 26- Sept 2

**Media and cultural studies: Theory, practice and the case of Israel**

*Introduction to Israeli society*

*History and political economy of Israeli media*

2. Sept. 9

**Nationalism, national identity and Israeli media**


Suggested:

3. Sept. 16

**Collective memory and Israeli media**


Suggested:

4. Sept. 23

**Identities**

*Ethnicity in Israeli media*


Lemish, Dafna (2000). The whore and the other: Israeli images of female immigrants from the former USSR, Gender and Society, 14/2, 333-349.

Suggested:

5. Oct. 7
**Arabs in Israeli media**

Sept 30 Rosh Hashana

6. Oct. 14
**Gender in Israeli media**

Suggested:

7. Oct. 21
**Youth cultures and media in Israel**
8. Oct. 21

Religion and Israeli media


http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2teOz8YNd-4


9. Oct. 28

Processes

Globalization/glocalization/Americanization


10. Nov. 4

Transformation of the public sphere: News, media, politics

Liebes, Tamar (1999). Displacing the news: The Israeli talk show as public space, Gazette, 61/2, 113-125.


11. Nov. 11 Please hand in assignments

Use and non-use of media technology

Ribak, Rivka and Michele Rosenthal (2006). From the field phone to the mobile phone: A cultural biography of the phone in Kibbutz Y., New Media and Society, 8/4, 551-572.

12. Nov. 18
Presentations

13. Nov. 25
Presentations

14. Dec. 2
Presentations

Conclusion


Assignment:
1. Select a cultural text or a cultural practice that relate to Israel in some way. This can be a film, a book, an ad, etc.
2. Send me a note about your choice (or options) by Sept 16; your note should consist of a paragraph (5-7 sentences) with the following: (1) a brief description of the text, (2) an explanation – why this text/practice are worthy of your analysis, and hopefully (3) what your argument might be; plus (4) a list of 2-3 (outside) references that can shed light on this text and help analyzing it.
3. Analyze the text/practice according to at least 3 of the perspectives presented in class.
   Drawing on the analyses that we read, provide (1) a description of the text that highlights its meanings – as a hegemonic (total?) voice, perhaps, or possibly as complicated, contradictory set of messages, etc. (2) why do you think this text is significant – for example, what are your assumptions (or theory) concerning its social and cultural role? Do you think it is reflective of things that stand behind it? Does it amplify or construct meanings, and if so, how? These points should set the stage for (3) an analysis of the text from different (though possibly related) perspectives: Israeli Hummus sold in US supermarkets as an intersection of, for example, nationalist, gendered and global discourses. Conclude the analysis by (4) expressing your opinion and making a sound argument concerning this text – its meanings, the practices that are associated with it, etc. (1,000-1,500 words).
   Description: 20%
   Assumptions/theory: 20%
   Analysis: 40%
   Argument: 20%

4. Prepare a presentation of your analysis that would consist of the same components.