

## Journalism 662 Fall 2007

### Mass Media and Minorities

#### 1st Short Paper Due: September 11, 3<sup>rd</sup> Class

Requirements: two pages, double-spaced, with footnotes. DUE Sep. 11<sup>th</sup>, 3rd class. Note that this is your only pass/fail assignment. I do this because I am more interested in your thoughts, opinions (correctly spelled, etc.) as a way of learning about you. Remember to give your paper a title, always a good introduction for the reader.

As you watch the video and do the readings ask if race is a significant factor in American life and if so, should it be a factor in educational access. There are other ways to consider this debate but I wanted to offer one example. The rationale for the ethnic studies requirement and questions of diversity on campus are encompassed within these discussions.

The UW-Madison conducted a decennial review of the ethnic studies requirement in 2002. You have seen selections of POV episode which dates from this period which is augmented by the four essays in the 'Campus Life' section from Studs Terkel's **Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel About the American Obsession**, which also comes from the early 1990s. Search the two campus papers online (<http://www.dailycardinal.com/> and <http://www.badgerherald.com/>) for stories and opinion pieces on race on our own campus, especially the ethnic studies requirement. Your assignment is to craft a personal response to these two pieces plus the original UW memo from Bernice Durrand, the final report of the Ethnic Studies Requirement Committee, adding in any other sources that seem appropriate. The selections from Terkel's book will help you to see the broader context beyond the campus. All of the texts are on electronic reserves. In your conclusion you should offer your own judgement on the requirement, should it be retained or not, giving your own reasons.

"There's been a campaign for multicultural courses as requirements in the curriculum. I'm split-minded on it. I can safely say the majority of white students, who aren't embittered racists, may be forced to sit in a class which they may not be interested in. They will say, "I have to sit here because these black students shouted loud enough to make the university institute this. "You can't force someone not to be a racist."

Fred Werner, editor of the student newspaper at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He comes from a town in central Illinois. Both of his parents are professors in the college there. He is twenty-one.