

2-8-2019

Critically Thinking about Real-World Content and Practices: The Theory Show & Tell

Erika Engstrom

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, erika.engstrom@unlv.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/btp_expo



Part of the [Speech and Rhetorical Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Engstrom, Erika, "Critically Thinking about Real-World Content and Practices: The Theory Show & Tell" (2019). *UNLV Best Teaching Practices Expo*. 56.
https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/btp_expo/56

This Poster is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Poster in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Poster has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Best Teaching Practices Expo by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

Critically Thinking about Real-World Content and Practices: The Theory Show & Tell

UNLV Best Teaching Practices Expo 2019

Erika Engstrom, Department of Communication Studies

The practice and the need it addresses

Communicating Analytical Skills Using Aural and Textual Channels

Need for the Practice

Analytical and communication skills list high on employers' priorities. Beyond assessing comprehension through exams and research papers, this project requires

- pilot research using content analysis
- in-class presentation
- short-form synthesis of findings

Requirements for the Practice

- Students prepare a five-minute "show and tell" presentation of self-chosen topics that illustrate specific concepts or theories drawn from lecture, textbook, class videos, or reading materials.
- Data for analysis can include academic journal articles, print magazine articles, advertisements, Internet news stories, web sites or posts, television, film, or other media, with instructor approval.
- Students must explain the significance of their chosen example to the course specifically and explain its importance within wider society.
- Students create a one-page handout using text and graphics that details and summarizes their findings.
- Students provide copies of their handout to classmates and the instructor.

Evidence this practice benefits UNLV Students

More We Know, the More We See

Comprehension and Creativity

- Students hone public speaking and multimedia skills.
- Students practice design and writing skills as well as demonstrate comprehension of course materials.

Masculinity of Nevil Scamander
 This film is a parody to the Harry Potter franchise. The film is featured in 1920 New York City. It is about Nevil Scamander, a Magizoologist, who has just finished his expedition to study magical creatures. He carries a briefcase which holds various fantastic beasts. Upon arriving in New York City, Nevil loses the briefcase and several of the creatures escape and he has to find them.

Chilling Adventures of Sabrina
 The drama reimagines the story of Sabrina the Teenage Witch as a dark coming-of-age tale that traffics in horror, the occult, and witchcraft, naturally. The teen is a young girl, Sabrina, wrestling to reconcile her dual nature as a half-witch, half-mortal while fighting the evil forces that threaten her, her family, and the daylight world humans inhabit.

SABRINA SPELLMAN
 • Counterhegemonic female character: feminist
 • Androgynous characteristics: heroic, independent, headstrong, utterly determined, and not afraid to stand up for what she believes in
 • Questions traditional ways
 • Creates a safe space for women at her high school
 • Fights corrupt men in power in both the mortal and immortal worlds

FEMINIST SHOW
 The girl power isn't forced or overdone; it just comes naturally in the dialogue, storylines, and character development. A lot of that has to do with the fact that there are so many women writers. It's a pretty diverse writing team which makes all the difference in the storytelling.

Student Feedback

"What Stood Out Most to Me"

- "Everyone really showed me more than just the basics and opened my eyes to more counterhegemonic* things that I'm not used to."
- "...how much of the content we learned in class related to things I saw every day but didn't know the type of intention it had."
- "The more you know, the more you see*" and I now I recognize this so I am constantly aware of what I am supporting and if it is positive."

*Concepts from lecture and readings

Resources and where to find them

Ready-Made Starting Points and Real-World Inspiration

Students as Resources

- Students' own interests, career goals, and expertise serve as sources for data and content.
- Application of material learned from unrelated courses further enhances the teaching (hence learning) of current course content.

Women in Design
 FUN FACTS
 -82.6% of web designers are male, yet 66.5% of designers say there's no bias
 -More men in design mean more things are marketed, designed, and coded for men. Even design is compared in a male gaze.

EXAMPLES
 -Google launched a hoodie in 2014 that monitored copper intake before it had menstrual tracking.
 -AI in Silicon Valley is noted for being strictly male dominated and making all the coding for the bots.
 -In AI, there is a study where Siri, Alexa, Cortana, and Google Home would take verbal abuse and some of them even flirted back.

What Difference Does it Make Visually? Well...
 Careers Entertainment
 -40% of staff are female
 -Typically in non-design positions- mainly hotel

The Venetian Hotel
 -Half of the design staff are female
 -90% of the marketing staff are female

Women are the selling point about each pool and their own sexuality.
 Each pool only had an image of the pool itself, the only image with women was the spa manager who had a spread to breasts and their own sexuality.

Presentation Resources and Tools

- Multimedia content used as data from online and streaming sites are readily available and easily accessed.
- PowerPoint and Prezi are encouraged for use during in-class presentations.

- Examples of handouts from past classes are posted on UNLV WebCampus, or can be posted on a non-campus website, such as Facebook.

How other UNLV teachers might adopt this practice

Cultivating Course Content, Critical Thinking, and Synthesis

Course Content

- As lecture material, presentation content becomes course content, ideal for assessment purposes and for use in future lectures by the instructor.
- The Theory Show and Tell can be used in any course in which application of theory to practice—and real-world examples of theory in action—requires concrete visuals.
- The application of critical thinking skills to any course material requires students not only to seek examples of theories, terms, and concepts from class, but also to explain their findings to their peers clearly.
- For large classes, the presentation aspect can be voluntary or for extra credit, while the synthesis and example itself are provided to the instructor and to students.

Project examples: a real-world business illustrates gender inequity in the car repair industry (left); a journal article on TV gender portrayals is summarized (right).

Car Repair Industry: A handout titled "Gisha Auto Clinic" with the slogan "Mechanics that talk like you and think like you - finally!" It features a photo of a woman in a car repair shop.

TV Gender Portrayals: A handout titled "PRIMETIME TELEVISION: GENDER REPRESENTATION AND OCCUPATIONAL PORTRAYALS" by Amberly Ann Nelson. It includes a photo of a woman and a list of findings from a study published in August of 2018 by Brittany Smith of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The study's purpose was to determine if gender role stereotypes are still present and what progress has been made compared to previous studies. Findings include:

- Content analysis of primetime programming airing during fall of 2018 on 5 major networks
- Examined gender, major/minor characters, genre, occupations, and marital status
- Real world representation of women is 50.9%
- Current study (2018) found:
 - 39.7% total female characters
 - 43.2% of major characters were female
 - 31.6% females in professional occupations
 - 60.5% of female characters were in dramas
- Networks are making small steps of progress to present counter-hegemonic portrayals even though a large proportion of hegemonic portrayals still exists.