critical media project
Lesson Plan: Age

This lesson plan should be used in conjunction with the media examples and the various resources, including diy activities. Please also see the provided example worksheet that can be printed and handed out for students to write their responses on the age of their choice. See CMP website for ideas.

PURPOSE & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will be able to critically analyze a range of media examples and their representations of age.

- Students will be able to learn how to "read" media texts (film, television, news, streaming content, Internet, radio and recording, social media etc.) and identify patterns and stereotypes in media representations of age.

- Students will be able to explain in written and oral forms the way age takes on varied meanings in different media contexts.

- Students will be able to explain how the media's representations of age can potentially impact how they understand their own and other identities.

GETTING STARTED:

- Ask students to think about how they see or understand themselves (what part of their identity is most important to them).

- Ask students to assess how many of their peers cite age as a fundamental part of who they are.

- Ask students to list stereotypes of age (see accompanying worksheet).

KEY IDEAS & CONCEPTS: (see longer overview on CMP website)

- Aging is a biological and societally-based process associated with a variety of different identities

- Different cultures and societies have different expectations associated with different ages or life-stages

- The expectations associated with certain ages (as well as how they are valued societally) has changed over time

- The labeling of different generations ("Baby Boomers", "Generation X", "Millennials") is based in demographics, or statistics that are associated with population-based data, and these demographic/generational labels both create and perpetuate certain expectations associated with different age groups

- Ageism is a form of discrimination based on age

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING: (use media examples & diy activities)

- Can students see and identify patterns in the representation of age in the media?

- Can students critically question and challenge the representations and stereotypes they identify?

- Can students critically question their own ideologies (ways of seeing) tied to age and the role media (on-screen and behind-the-scenes) plays in shaping those ideologies?

Name: _____   Class: _____

Class Discussion:

1. List any stereotypes (in media and everyday life) of different ages you can think of.
2. Are there any patterns that you identify on your list?
3. How would you characterize these representations? Are they positive? Negative? Neutral? Why?
4. Do you agree with these representations? Do they seem true or accurate? Why?

Your Thoughts/Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Small Group Discussion (after viewing media examples from website):

1. Describe what you noticed about the representations of age?
2. Are individuals from different ages represented differently? If so, how?
3. Are the representations of different ages constructed based on how they look? What they say? How they speak? How they move? What they do? Where they live?
4. Do the representations seem stereotypical or complex?
5. If they are stereotypical, what kinds of stereotypes do you notice?
6. Are there ways in which different ages are represented in relation to other identities (for example, gender or class)? If so, what kind of relationship is set up between age and gender?
7. What do you think the potential impact of such representations is on people who regularly view them?

Reflection: Should we try to change or challenge these stereotypes in the media? Why? How?

_____

_____

_____