



MAS 215

Theories of Writing for the Media

MQC1 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

15cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces students to some of the major theories and movements that have had an impact on the way we understand the commonplace and seemingly unproblematic acts of writing and reading media including marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, structuralism, deconstruction, post-colonialism and ecocriticism.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)

Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)

Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)

Develop written communication(4,5)

Develop discussion skills(2,5)

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Task 1	20%	17 April (week 5)
Task 2	20%	Continuous
Task 3	40%	3 June (week12)
Task 4	20%	Week 13 Tutorial

Task 1

Due: **17 April (week 5)**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will analyse a set text through one of the following foundational theories of writing-- Marxism, Psychoanalysis, Feminism. The set texts for each theory will be made available through ilearn during the first weeks of semester.

In this assignment students will be assessed on their critical engagement with unit and individually researched reading material, their undertaking of the task, their knowledge of theory, their critical and relational thinking and their use of academic writing conventions like structure, academic english and referencing.

Minimum Research Requirement: At least **two** unit readings from the relevant week plus at least **two** other relevant and appropriate academic sources.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)
- Develop written communication(4,5)

Task 2

Due: **Continuous**

Weighting: **20%**

Students are expected to read the material in the unit reader prior to tutorials, to take part in class discussion and group work, and attend lectures. Participation will be graded twice (2 X

10%) during the semester (in weeks 7 and 13).

Students will be assessed on their informed participation in the group work that features in each week's tutorial.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)
- Develop discussion skills(2,5)

Task 3

Due: **3 June (week12)**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will analyse a set text, or a small range of texts, through one of the following theories-- Postcolonialism, Ecocriticism, Psychogeography. As with essay one, the set texts will be circulated via ilearn during the semester.

In this assignment students will be assessed on their critical engagement with unit and individually researched reading material, their undertaking of the task, their knowledge of theory, their critical and relational thinking and their use of academic writing conventions like structure, academic english and referencing.

Minimum Research Requirement: At least **three** unit readings from the relevant week plus at least **three** other relevant and appropriate academic sources.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)
- Develop written communication(4,5)

Task 4

Due: **Week 13 Tutorial**

Weighting: **20%**

A closed-book class test in which students will answer three questions in one hour. The questions will be based on lecture and tutorial material from Weeks 2,6,7,11 and 12; one question per week/theory. Questions will test students' knowledge of the key concepts of that week's particular theory.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)

Delivery and Resources

The MAS215 unit reader will be available from the Co-op Bookshop on Phillip Street in Sydney CBD.

Theories of Writing for the Media is delivered as a 3-hour seminar and students are expected to have done the appropriate week's readings before class, and be prepared to discuss them.

This iteration of MAS215 includes a new week 11 lecture on writing and ethical theory.

Unit Schedule

Introduction

1 Doing Theory

Part One: Foundations & roots

2 Scientists of the text: Russian Formalism & French Structuralism

Raman Selden (1993) 'Structuralist Theories' in *Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, Basingstoke: Harvester/Wheatsheaf

3 Writing & Society: Marxism

Moyra Haslett (2000) from 'Culture and Society' and 'Culture and Ideology', *Marxist Literary and Cultural Theories*, Basingstoke: MacMillan

4 The Return of the Repressed: Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud (1991) 'The Dream Work' in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* [1916], Harmondsworth: Penguin

5 Writing (&) the Other: Feminism

Toril Moi (1988) 'Helene Cixous: an Imaginary Utopia', in *Sexual/Textual Politics*, London and NewYork: Routledge

Part Two: Developments & branches

6 Writer as (re)producer: Renovated Marxism

Tony Bennett (1982) 'Text and Social Process: The Case of James Bond', *Screen Education* 41: 3-14

7 Mind the Gap: Deconstruction

Jacques Derrida (2000) 'Structure, sign and play in the discourse of human sciences', [1966] in Lodge, D. (ed) *Modern Criticism and Theory*, Essex: Longman

8 The Empire Writes Back: Postcolonialism

Edward Said (2000) 'Orientalism Reconsidered', in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*, Cambridge: Harvard Uni. Press

Part Three: Contemporary Concerns

9 Tales from the Natural World: Ecocriticism

Scott Hess (2010) 'Imagining an Everyday Nature', *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment*, 17:1, Winter, 85-112

10 Writing the City/the City as Writing: Psychogeography

Merlin Coverley (2010) from *Psychogeography*, Harpenden: Pocket Essentials

11 Ethical Reading: the ethical turn

Martha Nussbaum (1997) *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life*, US: Beacon Press

Conclusion

12 Theory After theory? Theory in the post-theoretical moment

Brian Boyd (2006) 'Theory is Dead--Like a Zombie', *Philosophy & Literature*, 30:1, 289-298

13 No lecture (class test this week)

Please Note: full details of all the weekly readings are available in ilearn.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#).

Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Grades

Macquarie University uses the following grades in coursework units of study:

- HD - High Distinction
- D - Distinction
- CR - Credit
- P - Pass
- F – Fail

Grade descriptors and other information concerning grading are contained in the Macquarie University Grading Policy which is available at:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

For further information, please refer to the following link:

<http://universitycouncil.mq.edu.au/legislation.html>

Grade Appeals and Final Examination Script Viewing

If, at the conclusion of the unit, you have performed below expectations, and are considering lodging an appeal of grade and/or viewing your final exam script please refer to the following website which provides information about these processes and the cut off dates in the first instance. Please read the instructions provided concerning what constitutes a valid grounds for appeal before appealing your grade.

<http://www.city.mq.edu.au/reviews-appeals.html>

Attendance at Macquarie City Campus

All Students are required to attend at least 80% of the scheduled course contact hours each Session. Additionally Macquarie City Campus monitors the course progress of international students to ensure that the student complies with the conditions of their visa relating to attendance.

This minimum level of attendance includes all lectures and tutorials. Tutorial attendance will be recorded weekly. If any scheduled class falls on a public holiday this will be rescheduled as advised by your Lecturer. Attendance at any mid-Session or in-class test is compulsory unless otherwise stated.

Unavoidable non-attendance due to illness or circumstances beyond your control must be supported by appropriate documentation to be considered for a supplementary test. Other non-attendance will obtain zero for the test. You should refer to the section below on Special Consideration for more details about this.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)

- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

Student Support at Macquarie City Campus

Students who require assistance are encouraged to contact the Student Services Manager at Macquarie City Campus. Please see reception to book an appointment.

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

At any time students (or groups of students) can book our Student Advising rooms on Level 6 by emailing info@city.mq.edu.au with a day and time and nominated contact person. There are additional student study spaces available on Level 1.

Macquarie University Campus Wellbeing also has a presence on the City Campus each week. If you would like to make an appointment, please email info@city.mq.edu.au or visit their website at: <http://www.campuslife.mq.edu.au/campuswellbeing>

StudyWISE provides:

- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops http://www.mq.edu.au/learning_skills
- Personal assistance with your learning & study related questions

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

IT Help at Macquarie City Campus

If you wish to receive IT help, we would be glad to assist you at <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/> or call 02 9850-4357.

When using the university's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students and it outlines what can be done.

Students must use their Macquarie University email addresses to communicate with staff as it is University policy that the University issued email account is used for official University communication.

Students are expected to act responsibly when utilising Macquarie City Campus IT facilities. The following regulations apply to the use of computing facilities and online services:

- Accessing inappropriate web sites or downloading inappropriate material is not permitted.
- Material that is not related to coursework for approved unit is deemed inappropriate.
- Downloading copyright material without permission from the copyright owner is illegal, and strictly prohibited. Students detected undertaking such activities will face disciplinary action, which may result in criminal proceedings.

Non-compliance with these conditions may result in disciplinary action without further notice.

If you would like to borrow headphones for use in the Macquarie City Campus computer labs (210, 307, 311, 608) at any point, please ask at Level 2 Reception. You will be required to provide your MQC Student ID card. This will be held as a deposit while using the equipment.

For assistance in the computer labs, please see a Lab Demonstrator (usually they can be found in Lab 311, otherwise ask at Level 2 Reception).

Graduate Capabilities

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3
- Task 4

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify a range of theories that frame our encounters with cultural texts (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)
- Develop discussion skills(2,5)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3
- Task 4

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate (1,2,3)
- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Analyse cultural texts using different theories(1,2,3)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop written communication(4,5)
- Develop discussion skills(2,5)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1

- Task 2
- Task 3
- Task 4

Assignment Submission

Written work must be submitted either in class or to the MQC reception. Students must print and attach a completed bar-coded coversheet to all submitted work, complete with a signed and filled out cover official sheet.

Marked work will be returned in tutorials.

Late Penalties

Essays that are submitted late will be penalised 5% per day late unless the student has organised an extension of time beforehand. Students will be expected to provide a medical certificate or other written evidence of serious misadventure. Weekends count towards the late period.

Research Requirements

In both essays you must draw on the weekly readings that refer specifically to your chosen theory. You may also find that other readings from the reader are useful. You are also expected to find other relevant academic sources beyond those provided. Don't place your trust in online sources of doubtful provenance. You'll find in iLearn a brief list of 'suggested reading', including some reliable online material: please use this list as a starting point for your independent research. The quality of your research will be reflected in the quality of your analysis.

Referencing

For this unit the Harvard referencing style should be used. For a comprehensive referencing style guide please go to <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/harvard.html>. Please note that footnote-style referencing is not acceptable for this unit.

Turnitin

All written assignments must be processed through the Turnitin anti-plagiarism software. Essays are to be uploaded via iLearn.