



# CUL 121

## Seeing Culture: Politics of Visual Representation

S2 Day 2015

*Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Email for appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Visual culture brings together a range of theories, practices and texts that explore the relationship between vision, visibility and the way people act in their everyday lives. This unit introduces students to a variety of critical concepts which can be used in the analysis of visual texts. Exploring a range of imagery and media, including film, television, photography and Information Technology, we look at the ways visual culture shapes (and is shaped by) our social worlds, our bodies and identities. In particular we focus on relationships between the visual and normalising practices, contemporary politics, bodies and technologies. Within these relationships we explore the (re)production, performance and use of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, fatness and disability. Further to this we explore notions of genre, discourse, power and textuality through the application and testing of methods of visual analysis. Finally we place the visual within the contexts of embodiment, the human sensorium and the everyday.

## 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:

Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.

Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both

their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).

Critically review, analyse and synthesise findings.

Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.

Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#">Participation</a>	10%	Ongoing
<a href="#">Responses and Early Assessment</a>	5%	Weeks 3, 7, 10
<a href="#">Tutorial Exercise</a>	25%	Ongoing
<a href="#">Visual Analysis</a>	30%	06/10/2015
<a href="#">Screen Tests</a>	30%	Weeks 4, 8, 12

### Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

#### Outline:

You are required to attend and participate in all of your scheduled tutorials.

#### Submission Requirements:

You should notify your tutor as soon as possible if you believe your absence from tutorials might become a problem. Prolonged absence without appropriate explanation, medical certificates or supporting documentation will necessarily affect your participation grade and any aspects of the unit that require in-class assessments.

#### Criteria:

In addition to your own exercises, you should explicitly engage with, respond to and initiate discussion around the weekly themes and concepts. Please see the associated screening response assessment which is central to your participation in a number of tutorials.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Responses and Early Assessment

Due: **Weeks 3, 7, 10**

Weighting: **5%**

### **Outline:**

In the tutorial following each of the three screenings, you will **bring to class a written paragraph** that offers 1) a synopsis/description of the film/text and 2) explain how you think the screening relates to the study of visual culture.

### **Submission Requirements:**

You will read this to the class and submit a copy to your tutor. This paragraph should be no longer than 200 words. **You should also bring to class examples of other visual texts that deal with the same topic for discussion.**

### **Criteria:**

In addition to the above, please note: The first submission in week 3 is used as an **early diagnostic assessment** to identify students who might require help with their work. These reflective submissions are marked as a pass/fail based on whether you submit and whether it is received in the right tutorial.

This assessment is directly connected to your participation grade, and taken together the two comprise a total of 15% of your grade.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Tutorial Exercise

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **25%**

### **Outline:**

You will lead the tutorial for fifteen minutes. Your tutor will allocate topics/weeks and dates in the first tutorial and the exercises will begin in the following week.

**Submission Requirements:**

You will offer, in class, **an analysis of one specific visual text** - an image or object that you possess or have found in your research using what you believe to be the key terms and concepts with respect to the weekly topics. Define and explain these with examples from the readings and research you have done. There is no written component to this exercise - it is assessed in class and you do not submit any materials.

**Criteria:**

You are graded in class, on a series of criteria including: conceptual understanding, originality and presentation - each out of five, with a total score out of fifteen. There are no presentations in tutorials following screenings (see screening responses/ participation section). Seek assistance from your tutor if you have any problems. If you do not fulfill this assessment task you will lose 25% of your overall grade for this unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Critically review, analyse and synthesise findings.
- Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Visual Analysis

Due: **06/10/2015**

Weighting: **30%**

**Outline:**

You will conduct a critical analysis on a set topic from specific material covered and associated screenings from across the first half of the semester.

**Submission Requirements:**

The length is 1200 Words - Due Tuesday, October 6 by 6pm. Submission is **online only** via the ILearn Turnitin Assignments link.

**Criteria:**

- a) Extent to which the essay is focused on the specific question selected
- b) Structure: statement of aims in introduction, organisation of material (logical order and flow of

discussion), conclusion

c) Clarity of argument, quality of analysis and fluency in cultural studies terms

d) Identification of appropriate themes and concepts from the set texts and further reading and their usefulness in the analysis of examples

e) Use of appropriate evidence to support claims

f) Adequate and appropriate citation of sources

g) Presentation: format, spelling, syntax, grammar and expression

Unless you have been granted Special Consideration (Disruption to Studies), late submission will result in a penalty of 5% per day.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Critically review, analyse and synthesise findings.
- Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.

## Screen Tests

Due: **Weeks 4, 8, 12**

Weighting: **30%**

### **Outline:**

There are three periodic tests to be completed across the semester, and each test is worth 10 percent (30 percent in total).

### **Submission Requirements:**

You will complete the tests online via the quizzes section on iLearn. The tests are timed and are scored automatically through the online system. Each test will comprise a series of questions taken from lectures, readings and will focus on one of the screenings shown in the course.

### **Criteria:**

Please read the following notes and instructions:

1. The tests will take the form of ten direct-answer questions.
2. Whilst you undertake the tests in your own time and are able to consult your notes, the questions will come to you randomly and the time for each test will be capped at fifteen minutes.
3. Test one (due week 4) will cover week 1-4 and the first screening, test two will cover weeks

5-7 (due week 8) and the second screening, and test three (due week 12) will cover weeks 9-12 and the thirds screening.

4. You are encouraged to revise before logging on to begin each test.

5. If you fail to complete any test by the due date (without appropriate extension), you will lose 10% of your grades for each one missed.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.

## Delivery and Resources

**Delivery Mode: Internal, Daytime**

This unit will use: Echo, iLearn, Turnitin

### Times and Locations for Lectures and Tutorials

For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>.

Lectures: Wednesdays 10:00am - 11:00am Y3A Theatre 1(T1)

Tutorials: As per timetable (1hr per week, compulsory attendance)

There is a one-hour lecture (or a screening) and one weekly one-hour tutorial.

### Required and recommended resources

All readings and screenings for this course are through the library's online catalogue and it is your responsibility to access and read all materials before the appropriate tutorial. Please see the Unit Schedule section (below) for more information.

## Unit Schedule

**CUL121 Seeing Culture - Set weekly class topics and materials, S2, 2015.**

### WEEK 1: Seeing Culture (July 29)

*Reading:* Mitchell, W.J.T. (2002) 'Showing seeing: a critique of visual culture', *Journal of*

Visual

*Culture* Vol. 2, pp. 165-181.

**WEEK 2: Seeing Signs (Aug 5)**

*Reading:* Aiello, G. (2006) 'Theoretical Advances in Critical Visual Analysis: Perception, Ideology, Mythologies, and Social Semiotics', *Journal of Visual Literacy*, 26: 2, pp. 89-102.

**WEEK 3: Seeing Sex (Screening) (Aug 12)**

*Screening:* *The Price of Pleasure* (2008)

*Reading:* Tyler, M. (2014) 'Harms of production: theorising pornography as a form of prostitution', *Women's Studies International Forum* 48, pp. 114-123.

**WEEK 4: Seeing Science (NM) (Aug 19)**

*Reading:* Meyers, S. (2010) 'Invisible Waves of Technology: Ultrasound and the Making of Fetal Images', *Medicine Studies* 2, 197-209.

**WEEK 5: Seeing Fatness (Aug 26)**

*Reading:* Murray, S. (2005) 'Doing Politics or Selling Out? Living the Fat Body', *Women's Studies: An inter-disciplinary journal*, 34:3-4, pp. 265-277.

**WEEK 6: Seeing Disability (NM) (Sept 2)**

*Reading:* Garland-Thomson, R. (2002) 'The Politics of Staring: Visual Rhetorics of Disability in Popular Photography', in Snyder, S. L., Brueggemann, B.J. and R. Garland-Thomson (eds.), *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*, New York, MLA, pp. 57-75.

**WEEK 7: Seeing Immigration (Sept 9)**

*Screening:* *Immigration Nation – The Story of Us* (Episode 3, 2013)



*Reading:* Bleiker, R., Campbell, D., Hutchison, E. and X. Nicholson (2013) 'The visual dehumanisation of refugees', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 48:4, pp. 398-416.

### **WEEK 8: Reading Week (Sept 30)**

### **WEEK 9: Seeing Monsters (Oct 7)**

*Reading:* Mitchell, L. (2013) 'Monsters, Heroes, Martyrs and Their Storytellers: The Enduring Attraction of Culturally Embedded Narratives in the "War on Terror"',

### **WEEK 10: Seeing Crime (Screening) (Oct 14)**

*Screening:* *Contract Killers: Who Killed Carolyn Matthews?* (2011)

*Reading:* Carrabine, E. (2012) 'Just Images: Aesthetics, Ethics and Visual Criminology', *British Journal of Criminology* 52, pp. 463-489.

### **Week 11: Seeing Spectacles (Oct 21)**

*Reading:* Nayar, P. K. (2009) 'Scar Cultures: Media, Spectacle, Suffering', *Journal of Creative Communications*, 4:3, pp. 147-162.

### **Week 12: Seeing Senses (Oct 28)**

*Reading:* Elizabeth Stephens (2012) Sensation machine: Film, phenomenology and the training of the senses, *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 26:4, 529-539.

### **Week 13: Consultations**

**NOTE:** All readings and AV materials are available either through the library's online journal/database access, or through the Kanopy streaming service.

## 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](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](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](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/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

## Additional information

MMCCS website [https://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/faculties\\_and\\_departments/faculty\\_of\\_arts/department\\_of\\_media\\_music\\_communication\\_and\\_cultural\\_studies/](https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/)

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Information is correct at the time of publication

## 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](http://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](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## 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.

## Graduate Capabilities

### 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:

#### Assessment task

- Tutorial Exercise

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcome

- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise

## Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcomes

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis

## 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

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both

their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).

- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis
- Screen Tests

## **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**

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Critically review, analyse and synthesise findings.
- Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis
- Screen Tests

## 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

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).

### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis
- Screen Tests

## 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

- Memorize basic aspects (contemporary and historical) of visual cultural studies and be able to apply them through a variety of activities and analyses.
- Present work in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in both written and spoken form.

### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis

- Screen Tests

## Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Critically review, analyse and synthesise findings.
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Responses and Early Assessment
- Tutorial Exercise
- Visual Analysis
- Screen Tests

## Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Explain the politicised aspects of visual texts and Cultural Studies approaches to both their production and content (as discourses, texts, lived realities).
- Appraise issues and debates specific to Cultural Studies practice and its associated philosophical and political underpinnings.

### Assessment task

- Tutorial Exercise

## Course specific policies and requirements

### Attendance

CUL 121 requires that students attend every weekly (hour-long) tutorial. In addition to the formal lectures there are some weeks in which short films or television programs are screened. Attendance at lectures is strongly advised as lectures and screenings actively supplement the material covered in readings and provide the basis for tutorial activities and essay questions. Lecture links may be found on the iLearn page and abbreviated notes will be posted to each weekly section.

### Examination(s)

There is no examination for CUL121. Please see notes regarding assessment.

### Assignment submission

ALL ASSIGNMENTS to be submitted in online or in class. You must structure and reference essays appropriately, including a full and correct bibliography. See relevant sections in this guide for details with respect to turnitin, plagiarism and academic writing services.

### Extensions and penalties

You should complete all components of this course. Work submitted late without extension or proof/documentation of extenuating circumstances will incur a five percent penalty for each day after the due date. Extensions will not be permitted unless you have made an appropriate application for Disruption to Studies.