



MAS 215

Theories of Writing for the Media

MQC3 Day 2014

Dept of Media, Music & Cultural Studies

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer in Charge and Tutor

Dr Craig Johnson

craig.johnson@mqc.edu.au

Contact via Email

By appointment via email only.

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)

General Assessment Information

Written work must be submitted via the appropriate assignment box on Level 1, W6A. Students

must print and attach a completed bar-coded coversheet to all submitted work. A personalised coversheet is generated from the student section of the Faculty of Arts website at:

http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/current_students/undergraduates/admin_central/coversheet

Please generate your student details and click the GET MY ASSIGNMENT COVERSHEET button. No other coversheets will be provided by the Faculty.

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.**

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Task 1	20%	12th December (Week 5)
Task 2	20%	Continuous
Task 3	40%	30 January (Week 11)
Task 4	20%	Week 13 Tutorial

Task 1

Due: **12th December (Week 5)**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will analyse a set text through one of the following foundational cultural theories-- 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 publications.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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: **30 January (Week 11)**

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 publications.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 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, 8, 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 to purchase from the MQC reception.

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 New York: Routledge

Part Two: Developments & branches

6 -- Mind the Gap: Deconstruction

John Powell (1997) from *Derrida for Beginners: a Writers' and Readers' Documentary Comic Book*, London: Random House

7 -- The Empire Writes Back: Postcolonialism (**This class will be delivered on a different day - stay tuned**)

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

HOLIDAY BREAK

8 -- Renovated Marxism: Late Marxism

Fredric Jameson, Introduction to *Late Marxism*

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

Simon Stow (2006) 'Reading our Way to Democracy? Literature and Public Ethics', *Philosophy and Literature*, 30, 410-423

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 quiz

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.ht

[ml](#)

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/

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments_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) 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

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

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 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 task

- Task 2

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

Research Requirements

There are minimum research requirements for both essay assignments:

- **Essay One Minimum Research Requirement:** At least **two** unit readings from the relevant week plus at least **two** other relevant and appropriate academic publications.
- **Essay Two Minimum Research Requirement:** At least **three** unit readings from the relevant week plus at least **three** other relevant and appropriate academic publications.

When looking for relevant publications outside the unit reader don't place your trust in online sources of doubtful provenance. To help you in your research 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.