



MAS 215

Theorising Media

S2 Day 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Ian Collinson

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Y3A 191G

By appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces students to some of the major theories and movements, including marxism, psychoanalysis, feminism, structuralism, deconstruction, post-colonialism, ecocriticism etc., that have framed and continue to frame the way we understand the production and consumption of media, its meaning and its affect.

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 media texts and practices (1,2)

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

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

Communicate in written academic discourse (4,5)

Communicate in oral academic discourse (2,5)

General Assessment Information

Written work must be submitted via the Turnitin link that can be found in ilearn. You do not need to attach a cover sheet to your essays.

Late Penalties

Essays that are submitted late will be penalised 10% per day unless the student has organised an extension of time beforehand. Students will be expected to provide a completed Professional Authority Form (PAF) or other written evidence of serious misadventure. **Weekends count towards the late period.**

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Task 1	20%	No	4th September (Week 6)
Task 2	20%	No	Continuous
Task 3	40%	No	30th October (Week 12)
Task 4	20%	No	Week 13 Tutorial

Task 1

Due: **4th September (Week 6)**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will analyse a set text through one of the following foundational media/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:

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

- Analyse different media texts using different theories (1,2,3)
- Communicate in written academic discourse (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. Participation will be graded twice (2 X 10%) during the semester (weeks 3-7 and 8-12).

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 media texts and practices (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate about media texts and practices (1,2,3)
- Analyse different media texts using different theories (1,2,3)
- Communicate in oral academic discourse (2,5)

Task 3

Due: **30th October (Week 12)**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will analyse a pair of set 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:

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

- Analyse different media texts using different theories (1,2,3)
- Communicate in written academic discourse (4,5)

Task 4

Due: **Week 13 Tutorial**

Weighting: **20%**

A closed-book multiple-choice class test. The questions will be based on lecture and tutorial material from Weeks 2,6,7,11 and 12. 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 media texts and practices (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate about media texts and practices (1,2,3)
- Communicate in written academic discourse (4,5)

Delivery and Resources

The MAS215 unit reader will be available from the MQ Co-op bookshop (<http://www.coop.com.au/s/macquarie-university>).

Lectures will be held at 4pm on Tuesday afternoons (Lotus Theatre) available through Eco360. Tutorials will be held at various times from Wednesday to Friday.

Essays must be submitted via the Turnitin link in ilearn. Students must ensure that they upload the correct file as Turnitin will only accept a single submission.

Unit Schedule

Introduction

1 -- *Doing Theory*: How do we do theory? What does theory do to us?

Part One: Theoretical foundations

2 -- *Scientists of the text*: Structuralism

Kate McGowan (2006) 'Structuralism and Semiotics', in Malpas, S. and Wake, P. (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Critical Theory*, London: Routledge

3 -- *Media & Society*: Marxism

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

4 -- *Reading the Repressed*: Psychoanalysis

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

5 -- *Media and 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 -- *Distracting Distractions*: Mass Culture Theory

Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1999) 'The Culture Industry Thesis: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' [1944], in Daring, S. (ed) *The Cultural Studies Reader*, London: Routledge

7 -- *The Return of the Reader*: Reader-response Theory

Jennifer Riddle Harding (2014) 'Reader Response Criticism and Stylistics', in Burke, M. (ed) *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*, London: Routledge

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

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

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_2016.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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/

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.

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/

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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources 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:

Learning outcome

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

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3

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 media texts and practices (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate about media texts and practices (1,2,3)
- Analyse different media 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 media texts and practices (1,2)
- Understand key issues in a wide and far ranging theoretical, historical and cultural debate about media texts and practices (1,2,3)
- Analyse different media texts using different theories (1,2,3)
- Communicate in oral academic discourse (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 about media texts and practices (1,2,3)
- Analyse different media 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

- Communicate in written academic discourse (4,5)
- Communicate in oral academic discourse (2,5)

Assessment tasks

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3

Changes from Previous Offering

In the 2017 iteration of MAS215 there is a new lecture and tutorial devoted to reader-response theory (week 7) and the format of the class-test assessment has been altered slightly.

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 the Turnitin link in ilearn.