



# MECO833

## Storytelling Techniques

S2 Day 2017

*Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Associate Professor Peter Doyle

[peter.doyle@mq.edu.au](mailto:peter.doyle@mq.edu.au)

Contact via Email please (not phone)

Y3A 151

Normally Wednesdays. Other times by arrangement -- email requests please.

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MCreIndMFJ or MCrMedia or MCrInd or MFJ or MIntComm or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntComm

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will present a special topic in creative media. It will draw on the particular expertise of available creative media academics each year. Students may check with the program director for offerings for the current year.

## 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:

Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.

Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.

Demonstrate professional technical competence, abilities to collaborate creatively and meet professional standards.

Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<a href="#">Seminar preparation tasks</a>	10%	No	continuing
<a href="#">Story analysis</a>	30%	No	Week 7, Wednesday, 5pm
<a href="#">Story project</a>	30%	No	Week 10, Friday, 5pm.
<a href="#">In class test</a>	30%	No	Week 11. Wednesday 12:00pm

### Seminar preparation tasks

Due: **continuing**

Weighting: **10%**

Task: On each of the **specified weeks\*** students will bring to class a **200-300** word written reflection on that week's **readings and the specified mini-lecture**

Mini-lectures accessible via Echo. MECO833 weekly readings can be accessed via LLibrary Reserve. A detailed schedule, including weekly readings will be posted on ILearn.

The reflections are required for Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7 ONLY..

Students will submit each week's reflection via TurnItIn by 12pm (ie. before class) on each due date.

Please also bring your completed task to class.

The reflections will draw out and/or respond to, key observations and/or ideas present in the readings/lecture. In your reflections, you do not need to give equal weight to all the readings, or to every part of the lecture. There should be evidence, however, that you have read all the readings for that week, and audited the Echo mini-lecture, if appropriate.

You need to make your own choices as to the substance and scope of your reflections. (That's what makes them reflections.) In the past, students have sometimes chosen to focus on *some* of the following matters, guided by such questions as

- What were the *three* (or whatever number) central matters raised in the lecture?
- What was noteworthy about the readings/lecture with regards to:
  - Questions of storytelling *structure*?
  - Techniques of storytelling?
  - Histories of storytelling?
- Did anything in the readings or the lecture relate to your own storytelling experience and narrative efforts? Your own history as a consumer of story? Were there any lessons there of relevance to you?

- Was there anything you strongly agreed or disagreed with? Why?

And so on.

**Submission:** via Turnitin on iLearn by the required date and time.

**Late Submissions:** Students who submit late work without an extension will receive a penalty of 10% per day. This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.
- Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.

## Story analysis

Due: **Week 7, Wednesday, 5pm**

Weighting: **30%**

Write a concise analysis of a publicly accessible non-fiction or fiction media text, using (1) the techniques and analytical tools that have been discussed in class and (2) any other analytical tools and methods, as you see fit.

Pay special regard to the text's (a) narrative structure and (b) the degree of sophistication and innovativeness of its storytelling.

The choice of story is up to you: it could be short fiction, a film, video clip, song, comic or graphic novel, audio, podcast, poem, broadcast, installation, museum exhibit, artwork, online content etc but the subject you choose must have a *significant narrative component*. You could also consider for analysis a short speech, sermon, essay, or public communication of some sort. (You *may* choose a less overtly narrative form, such as say, a piece of non-verbal music or abstract artwork and analyse its storytelling aspects, but this must be discussed with the unit convenor first.)

An *entire* feature film or novel is probably too large for this assignment, but you may choose a scene from a film or section of a novel. (Discuss with convenor.)

Some of the aspects you *might* consider in your analysis:

-- How the separate "pieces" of story are put together. How the piece uses such devices as dynamic contrast.

-- To what extent (and how successfully) the story uses "arc" or other narrative shapes.

-- The extent to which the story works with the audience's expectations or deliberately thwarts expectations. Or, to put it another way, does the piece broadly fit in to an established style or genre or does it seek to break genre boundaries down? Does it "mix and match" in creative and innovative ways?

-- Is the storytelling honest? Is it ethical? Does it seek to evoke authentic emotion or is it manipulative, or is it both? Is the storytelling strategy one of simplicity or complexity? And so on.

(Try to think of all the options and methods available to the storyteller(s) and assess how successfully they have chosen.)

- How does the storytelling define and locate its potential audience? Who is it aimed at?
- To what extent the story uses *difficulty* or strangeness to more deeply engage audience. (Or if it deliberately uses simplicity, how well is this achieved?)
- What does the story *claim* to be saying? What is it *really* saying? (Or, ask yourself, first, “What is this story about?” Then, “But what is it *really* about?”)
- The voice and the mood of the piece.
- What’s going on the surface, what’s going on down deep?
- And maybe most important of all, how does the piece work on *you* – how *exactly* does it manage to “press your buttons” (or fail to do so).

And so on.

**Marking criteria:** This task will be assessed on specific criteria including clarity of content, creative components and realisation of aims. In particular, marks will be awarded for the success with which you:

- (i) Choose the item for your analysis.
- (ii) Are able to go “below the surface” in your analysis.
- (iii) Are able to enunciate fresh, less-obvious observations about your media exemplars.
- (iv) Locate your exemplars in relation to current media landscapes and practices.
- (v) Bring to your analysis an awareness of literary, narrative, expository, design and other strengths and values.
- (vi) Can enact a detached, rigorous, critical analysis
- (vii) Are able to express yourself in concise, eloquent, grammatically and syntactically acceptable prose.

A more detailed brief for this assignment will be provided in-class.

**Submission:** via Turnitin on iLearn by the required date and time.

**Late Submissions:** Students who submit late work without an extension will receive a penalty of 10% per day. This penalty does not apply for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.

## Story project

Due: **Week 10, Friday, 5pm.**

Weighting: **30%**

Option 1. Drawing on the ideas that have been investigated through the course of this semester, **produce an original media work**, focussing in particular on **storytelling**.

OR

Option 2. Propose a project (group or individual) of your own that is consistent with the aims and learning outcomes of this unit. For this option, it is essential that you discuss the idea with course convenor and get his/her approval before commencing.

OR

Option 3. Drawing on the ideas that have been investigated through the semester, **rigorously and critically analyse a media product** (film, print media, book, comic, script, theatre or performance piece, graphic novel, audio recording, web item, installation, exhibition, song, album) in regard to its storytelling methods, qualities, ethics and effectiveness.

**Marking criteria:** This task will be assessed on specific criteria including *clarity of content*, *creative* components and *realisation* of aims. Criteria particular to this stage of the project will include:

(i) If you choose a **creative work**, then the intrinsic story qualities of the finished project itself, as finished work, will be of major importance. These qualities might include overall originality; artistic and narrative values; and so on. Assessment thus will also include adjudication of how well the work achieves its own aims, judged on its own terms.

Important note: creative works are sometimes extremely time consuming: a film script for example might take a year fulltime to write. A comic, a play or even a song likewise. If you choose this option it is essential that you discuss the scope with the unit convenor, who will suggest ways of keeping the project realistic in scale – ie not too big.

So, rather than a full script, say, students might choose to produce a storyboard, or write one of two (or however many) scenes. Rather than a long feature article, students might submit *part of the article*. A short video or trailer, rather than a fully finished production. A photo essay rather than a documentary. A well worked out *plan* rather than a finished research project. A chapter rather than a whole memoir. A *short* podcast, etc etc.

(ii) If you do a group creative work, then **collaborative** aspects and processes will be assessed, based on evidence of creative and collegial approach to both successes and difficulties encountered. Marks will be awarded for individual contributions as well, (which are to be clearly foreshadowed in Assessment 2, Project Proposal)

Most significant criteria for analytical components will include:

(i) Demonstrated ability to integrate ideas and concepts discussed in this unit into a coherent work...

(ii) Clarity and rigorousness of the analysis.

(iii) Demonstrated breadth of background reading.

(iv) Demonstrated abilities to apply analytical tools.

(v) Originality and depth of the analysis.

**Submission:** via Turnitin on iLearn by the required date and time.

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On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

## In class test

Due: **Week 11. Wednesday 12:00pm**

Weighting: **30%**

Students will complete a one hour class test. For this you will be asked to write **two** short essays, choosing from a number of possible topics. The test will focus on readings, lectures and matters discussed in class during the course of MECO833.

This is an online "open book" test, and must be submitted via Turnitin at the time specified.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.

## Delivery and Resources

Delivery and Resources

**Unit Readings** can be accessed via Library Reserve.

Technical arrangements and material support will be provided on a case-by-case basis. As this unit focusses primarily on narrative, storytelling dynamics and structure, technical expertise and production accomplishment *per se* are not major learning outcomes or assessment criteria.

If the unit convenor determines that technical support is appropriate and feasible, students will

be referred to relevant tech support team members: Marcus Eckermann (Screen Production), Ben Nash (Music), Peter Ring (Radio), Mike Baber (Futures Lab), John Cook (Labs 002 & 006) and Holly Robinson. Please do not contact support staff without first discussing technical requirements with unit convenor.

Additional information

MMCCS website [https://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/faculties\\_and\\_departments/faculty\\_of\\_arts/departments/media\\_music\\_communication\\_and\\_cultural\\_studies/](https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments/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 Enquiry Service

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## Equity 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.

## 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.

## 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\\_2016.html](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](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](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/](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).

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## Graduate Capabilities

### PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate professional technical competence, abilities to collaborate creatively and meet professional standards.
- Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

### PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

#### Learning outcomes

- Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.
- Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.
- Demonstrate professional technical competence, abilities to collaborate creatively and meet professional standards.
- Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

#### Assessment tasks

- Story analysis
- Story project

## PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.
- Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.
- Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

### Assessment tasks

- Story analysis
- In class test

## PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Generate sophisticated ideas and concepts for Creative Media works.
- Synthesise and analyse texts (creative and critical) in the specific Creative Media field.

### Assessment tasks

- Seminar preparation tasks
- Story project

## PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Adapt discipline-specific knowledge in Creative Media to novel situations.

## PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

## Learning outcome

- Demonstrate professional technical competence, abilities to collaborate creatively and meet professional standards.

## Assessment task

- Story analysis