MECX121

Seeing Culture: Politics of Visual Representation

S2 OUA 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor & Tutor
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Online Consultation Tuesday 3-4pm via Zoom Web Conferencing or Zoom Chat (further
details in ilearn)

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
From the printed page to the internet, from figurative painting to digital photography, from
radio to the iPod, from film to the webcam, the last hundred years have seen a radical
transformation in the way ideas and values are communicated, and how we're entertained.
These changes aren't just a revolution in technology, however. They have been accompanied
by an even more radical transformation in how people understand their place in the world.
From modem authority to post-modern multiplicity, from national identity to global fluidity, from
passive consumption to interactivity, our understandings of who we are, how we relate to one
another and how we identify ourselves have also been transformed. The aim of this unit, and
cultural studies in general, is to introduce you to how these changes are related to one
another, and how they affect the way we live, play and work. All enrolment queries should be
directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are
available at https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/

Learning Outcomes

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

Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable
students to analyse elements of our visual culture.

Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised
aspects of visual texts

Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

General Assessment Information

In this unit, students must submit original work. If you have previously been enrolled in this unit, please note that you cannot submit the same piece of work. Please contact your convenor for an alternative task.

If students require assistance with their assessments, they should contact their tutor and consult the resources on referencing and essay writing in the 'Assessments' section on ilearn. Students can also contact the Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) team for advice on academic writing, study strategies and planning. Additional support services are listed here: http://students.mq.edu.au/support/.

Late Submissions:

Tasks 10% or less: No extensions will be granted. Students who have not submitted the task prior to the decline will be awarded a mark of 0 for the task, except for cases in which an application for Disruption to Studies is made and approved.

Tasks above 10%: No extensions will be granted. 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.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Visual Analysis	30%	No	22 August 11:59pm (AEST)
Portfolio & Reflection Task	30%	No	26 September 11:59pm (AEST)
Final Essay	40%	No	7 November 11:59pm (AEST)

Visual Analysis

Due: **22 August 11:59pm (AEST)**
Weighting: **30%**

Students are required to write a scholarly 8000 word visual analysis that responds to the prompt below:

- In *Theoretical Advances to Critical Visual Analysis: Perception, Ideology, Mythologies, and Social Semiotics*, Giorgia Aiello writes that 'Cultural Studies focuses on revealing how dominant cultural norms become embedded in media messages [images] in ways that allow them to be reinforced, internalised, and ultimately also become *hegemonic*'

(2006, p. 98). Drawing on the selected advertisement available on ilearn, discuss Aiello's statement. Does this Australia Day advertisement for XXXX Beer reveal the way in which dominant cultural norms are 'reinforced, internalised' and 'become hegemonic?'

In their essays, students are required to draw on the unit readings in order to build an argument and perform a thoughtful and well-supported analysis of advertisement. Students are also required to develop academic writing skills in their essays. If they have any questions about the structure of an academic essay, they should ask their tutor, raise questions on the general discussion board and use the resources available at mq.edu.au/learningskills. They should also include in-text referencing and attach a reference list at the end of their essay. For more information on referencing please follow the link to Macquarie University Library's Referencing Guide here: http://libguides.mq.edu.au/Referencing.

Essays will be marked according to the following assessment criteria:

1. Demonstrates a clear and effective grasp of relevant key concepts
2. Demonstrates engagement with the unit readings and material
3. Stages a well-supported analysis of relevant key concepts and the selected image
4. Effective use of writing skills to present academic research, including consistent and accurate use of in-text referencing

Submission: Students will submit their essay via the Turnitin link on the unit iLearn Site.

Late Penalty: A late penalty of 5% per day, including weekends, will be applied.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.

• Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

• Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Portfolio & Reflection Task

Due: **26 September 11:59pm (AEST)**
Weighting: **30%**

In this unit, students are required to participate in the weekly forum in two ways. First, students must post a 200-300 word response to the weekly activity within the defined time frame. Second,

students must also encourage engagement and peer learning by commenting on one other post in the weekly forum. The forum will be open from the Tuesday of each week until the following Tuesday.

For this assessment, students will draw on their weekly tasks in order to submit one word document to turnitin that contains two sections.

Section One: Activity Portfolio

For this section of the assessment, students must collate their activity posts from Week 1 - Week 7 and paste them into a Word Document.

Section Two: Scholarly Reflection

For this section of the assessment, students are required to select two of their own responses to the weekly activities undertaken in the discussion forms between weeks 1-7. They are required to complete a 400-500 word scholarly reflection task for each post.

In these scholarly reflections, students are required to outline the context of their post on the discussion forum, demonstrate how it enhances their understanding of the key concepts or methods explored in the unit, and discuss how their thoughts have developed since writing their post.

Students can find a template for this assessment task on the main ilearn page, underneath the link to the dialogue module and unit guide. Each post they include should be 150-300 words in length (about a paragraph). This means you may either use a full post, or an extract. The posts are not included in the word count.

This assessment task will be marked according to the following **assessment criteria:**

1. Submission of weekly writing activities, including two of the student's weekly responses for reflection

2. Demonstrates a clear grasp of relevant key theoretical concepts and their context

3. Demonstrates the ability to identify the significance and implications of relevant key concepts

4. Demonstrates a critical engagement with relevant unit readings, cultural studies scholarship and debates

5. Stages a thoughtful reflection on the process of learning and engaging with cultural studies scholarship

6. Effective use of writing skills to present academic research, including consistent and accurate use of in-text referencing

Submission: Students will submit this task via the Turnitin link on the unit iLearn Site.

Late Penalty: Students who submit late work without an approved extension will receive a penalty of 5% per day.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek

an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
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Final Essay

Due: **7 November 11:59pm (AEST)**
Weighting: **40%**

Students are required to write a 1,500 word essay that responds to the question:

- 'The world of images that we interact with on a daily basis is caught up in the power relations of the societies in which we live ... Just as images are both representations and producers of ideologies of their time, they are also factors in relations of power' (Sturken and Cartwright 2001, p. 72). Using an example of your choice, that relates to one of the topics examined in this course, critique Sturken and Cartwright's understanding of our visual culture. Are images 'elements within ... power relations?'

In order to write their essays, students must draw on their example, academic research, several readings and the understanding of visual culture they have developed throughout the unit. They must also focus on one of the topics studied between week three and week twelve. Students should also aim to use the readings to develop a well-theorised argument that can be illustrated using detailed analysis of their chosen image.

This assessment task will be marked according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstrates the ability to deploy analytical skills in order to develop a scholarly and well-supported argument
2. Demonstrates a clear and effective grasp of relevant key concepts
3. Demonstrates critical and sustained engagement with the unit readings
4. Demonstrates knowledge and critique of key issues and methods within cultural studies
5. Ability to stage a well-supported and detailed analysis of their chosen image
6. Effective use of writing skills to present academic research, including consistent and accurate use of in-text referencing.

Submission: Students will submit their Final Essay via the Turnitin link on the unit iLearn site.

Late Penalty: A late penalty of 5% per day, including weekends, will be applied.

Extensions: Students who have experienced a disruption to their studies and would like to seek an extension must submit a disruption to studies notification via ask.mq.edu.au. Please email your tutor if you have any questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
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Delivery and Resources

Students will complete this unit online. At the beginning of the study period, they will find the weekly schedule listed sequentially down the ilearn page from week 1 to week 13. Listed underneath each week, they will find details about the content, lecture, a link to the unit readings and a link to the weekly activity and discussion forum.

Unit Lectures: The lectures in this unit are available in ilearn. They are prepared by many of the cultural studies staff in the Media, Music, Communications and Cultural Studies Department at Macquarie University.

Unit Readings: The readings for each week are available via online 'Unit Readings,' a service provided by the Macquarie University Library. A link to the readings is provided in the listing for each week. If you have trouble finding and/or accessing the readings, please search the library's online database and consult your tutor.

Weekly Activities and Discussion: At the beginning of each week, your tutor will send an announcement that introduces the weekly topic and highlights any upcoming tasks. Following the announcement, they will also post an activity for you to complete in the weekly section. These activities are designed to help you develop your understanding of the unit content. They also aim to provide a space to ask questions and interact with your peers.

The General Discussion Forum: If you have any general questions about the unit or an assessment, and would like to share them with your peers, please start a conversation in the general discussion forum. This forum is open for everyone to start discussions, share resources and ask questions.

The Dialogue Module: This module is available for students who would like to have private conversations with their tutor.

Planning the study period: The OUA Weekly Calendar can be used to plan both your assessment tasks and weekly activities. It can be found here: http://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/weekly-calendars

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure (https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable

2. were beyond your control

3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work

4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements

5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit Ask MQ and use your OneID to log in

2. Fill in your relevant details

3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and

navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents

4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures
Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to the census date (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the census date - you might be able to apply for Special Circumstances. If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can apply online.

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to apply directly to Macquarie University.

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.

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

- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Portfolio & Reflection Task
- Final Essay

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 outcomes

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
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- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment task

- Final Essay

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

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable

students to analyse elements of our visual culture.

- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Final Essay

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

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.

- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Portfolio & Reflection Task
- Final Essay

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

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts
- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Portfolio & Reflection Task
- Final Essay

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

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts
- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Portfolio & Reflection Task
- Final Essay

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

- Demonstrate critical skills, informed by cultural theories and approaches, that will enable students to analyse elements of our visual culture.
- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts
- Develop research and writing skills that will enable students to review, analyse and present their findings in a manner conforming to accepted academic standards in written form.

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Portfolio & Reflection Task
- Final Essay

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 outcome

- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

Assessment tasks

- Visual Analysis
- Final Essay

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 outcome

- Develop analytical skills that enable students to identify and critique the politicised aspects of visual texts

Assessment task

- Final Essay