



# SOCX279

## Sociology of Media

S1 OUA 2018

*Dept of Sociology*

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#### **Disclaimer**

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

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Tutor

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Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the consequences of living in a world where mediated forms of communication have replaced many forms of face-to-face communication. Through a survey of key thinkers in the sociology of media and communication, students will examine questions such as: How do new media technologies impact society? Is watching television a ritual activity? What kinds of community are possible via the internet? These topics will be used to illustrate how key concepts in sociology such as change, modernity, self, community, sociability, etc. can be applied to the study of media contexts. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see [www.open.edu.au](http://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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society
- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

## General Assessment Information

\* All assignments with due dates must be submitted by 5pm on Sunday of the designated week except for *Assignment 4: Research Essay*, which is due by 5pm on Friday at the end of Week 13.

We recommend that you become familiar with the assessment tasks of this course as soon as possible to gain a clear understanding of what's expected of you and how you will be assessed.

## Assessment Tasks

| Name                                 | Weighting | Hurdle | Due                       |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------------------------|
| <u>Participation</u>                 | 10%       | No     | Ongoing & sample by wk 12 |
| <u>Portfolio of weekly responses</u> | 25%       | No     | End of week 4             |
| <u>Essay Plan</u>                    | 25%       | No     | End of week 7             |
| <u>Research Essay</u>                | 40%       | No     | End of week 13            |

### Participation

Due: **Ongoing & sample by wk 12**

Weighting: **10%**

This assessment requires you to a) participate each week on the discussion forums and b) submit a sample post\* (250 words) to Turnitin.

\*You can submit this component of the task any time up until the end of Week 12. However, **it is highly recommended that you submit this earlier in the course as the final other assessment task is also due close to Week 12.**

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
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- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

### Portfolio of weekly responses

Due: **End of week 4**

Weighting: **25%**

Up to 500 words (1-2 pages double spaced) each week on the set readings up until and including week 4. You must directly relate your response to the ideas and topics raised in the readings.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society

## Essay Plan

Due: **End of week 7**

Weighting: **25%**

Plan of your final research essay, of 500 words in length plus a preliminary reference list (1-2 pages double spaced, excluding the reference list). This plan gives you an opportunity to develop a focused response to your research essay question and to get feedback on your intended approach to the essay. You can set the plan out as a brief capsule summary of your ideas and it can include dot points. You should establish the main areas you want to cover and summarise very briefly some background reading you have started. Make sure you make it clear which Research Essay Question you are addressing by including it in **bold** at the beginning of your essay plan.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

## Research Essay

Due: **End of week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

An original Research Essay of 2000 words on set topics covering themes and issues discussed in the course. Must answer one of the questions listed under Research Essay Questions (the list of essay questions and marking criteria can be found via the 'Research Essay (2000 words)' submission link under the 'Assessments & Guide' topic.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

## Delivery and Resources

### Required and recommended texts and/or materials

#### Required Reading

The set text for this unit is *Media and Communication* by Paddy Scannell (London: Sage, 2007). It is available online through the library website: [http://www.mq.edu.au/on\\_campus/library/](http://www.mq.edu.au/on_campus/library/)

Physical copies can be purchased from: <http://www.unibooks.com.au/media-and-communication>

Weekly readings are also available on [e-Reserve](#) (click on the link & type in the course code or name of the author).

#### Recommended Reading

Go to [e-Reserve](#) and type in the course code to retrieve a range of articles relating to this course.

Please note – further readings are made available where possible. If readings are not available in e-Reserve please use Macquarie University Library's electronic resources for journal articles and search your closest library for books and book chapters

#### Unit webpage and technology used and required

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>

PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement.

Please contact teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements. Consult the OUA website for more detailed information on technology requirements:

<http://www.open.edu.au/public/future-students/getting-started/computer-requirements>

## Unit Schedule

### Weekly schedule

|        |                                    |
|--------|------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Introduction to Sociology of Media |
|--------|------------------------------------|

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Week 2</b>  | Sociological Approaches to Media                           |
| <b>Week 3</b>  | Media Communications and Social Change I: Marshall McLuhan |
| <b>Week 4</b>  | Media Communications and Social Change I: Raymond Williams |
| <b>Week 5</b>  | Mediated Interaction                                       |
| <b>Week 6</b>  | News, Ideology and Propaganda                              |
| <b>Week 7</b>  | Case study: Race & ethnicity                               |
| <b>Week 8</b>  | Case study: Gender and games                               |
| <b>Week 9</b>  | Case study: Accessibility/Disability                       |
| <b>Week 10</b> | Case study: News and Media Regulation                      |
| <b>Week 11</b> | New Media and Forms of Sociability (Part I)                |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Week 12 | New Media and Forms of Sociability (Part II) |
| Week 13 | Course Review                                |

## 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](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)



Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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).

## 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://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/offices\\_and\\_units/information\\_technology/help/](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 outcomes

- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

#### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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

- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

#### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society
- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

### Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in

society

## Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

## Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape

social life

- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society
- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 outcomes**

- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society
- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Essay Plan
- Research 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 outcomes**

- Apply different sociological approaches -- theoretical and methodological -- to the study of media and society
- Develop informed and analytically rigorous arguments regarding the role media play in society
- Critically engage with other students' ideas through structured discussion

## **Assessment tasks**

- Participation
- Portfolio of weekly responses
- Essay Plan
- Research Essay

## **Changes from Previous Offering**

The due dates for first two assessment items (portfolio and essay plan) have been moved earlier in the semester to align with the Macquarie University Session dates.

## **Teaching staff and communications**

There are three ways to keep in contact with staff and other students in this unit:

1. The **Dialogue Module** allows you to communicate with your tutor.

2. In the **Announcements / News**, the teaching staff will make unit-wide announcements. These will mostly concern administrative matters (Please note: Students cannot post in this forum). All participants are subscribed to this forum and will automatically receive email notification of these important announcements.
3. Check the **General Discussion Forum** on a regular basis for weekly communications by your tutor. This forum also allows you to post any questions you might have in relation to this unit.