



# MMCC3031

## Forensic Media

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

*School of Communication, Society and Culture*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer and Tutor

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25 Wallys Walk, Room B454

Tuesdays 2-4pm; Wednesdays 3-4pm

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the crucial roles that forensic media play in news media organisations. It offers a brief history of the historical emergence of forensic media, tracking the development of the inked fingerprint, police mug shot, forensic photography and the establishment of criminal archives. It then examines the broad spectrum of contemporary technologies that are shaping the field of forensic media, including: forensic typical body charts, border technologies, satellite imaging and crisis mapping, CCTV, surveillance technologies and social media. It also examines the manner in which fictional television series, such as CSI, represent forensics and the manner in which they have influenced actual forensic practices. Forensic technologies have now become foundational for news organisations in order for them to illustrate and evidence their news stories – from social media apps to record and communicate unfolding newsworthy events to forensic satellite imaging to evidence humanitarian and environmental crises. This unit places forensic media within news media contexts in order to address the ethical, geopolitical and social questions that the use of such media raises.

## 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:

**ULO1:** research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.

**ULO2:** apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.

**ULO3:** analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.

**ULO4:** apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.

**ULO5:** communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.

**ULO6:** apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

## General Assessment Information

### IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT NOTICE: LATE PENALTY

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs) will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.

### FINAL ESSAY

Assessment Type 1: Essay

Indicative Time on Task 2: 54 hours

**Due: 07/11/2025 11.55pm**

**Weighting: 60%**

**Submission:** Final essay to be electronically submitted via Turnitin.

**NB: In your final essay, DO NOT write on the same topic as your tutorial presentation. If you reproduce in your final essay the same topic as your tutorial presentation you will risk failure.**

## Final Essay Key Points:

This assessment task requires a formal essay that fulfils the conventions of the academic genre, including critical address of key issues, analytical argumentation and buttressing of all assertions with relevant evidence and scholarship.

**References:** There is no set number of references for this essay. The rule of thumb for academic essays is that you must include references that are relevant to the topic, that support and illuminate your arguments and that demonstrate your understanding of the key theoretical concerns of the topic and that evidence your own scholarship. So, draw on both Leganto sources and any other scholarly resources that work to strengthen your arguments and that demonstrates your scholarship.

**Referencing Style:** You are free to choose to use any standard academic reference style in the writing of your final essay, including Harvard, MLA, Chicago and so on. Just be sure to be accurate and consistent in the use of your chosen reference style and to always acknowledge all paraphrasing and direct quotation of sources.

**Word Count:** There is a 10% +/- on the 2000 word count. The final word count does not include the bibliography of texts you have referenced in the course of your essay.

On successful completion of your final essay you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.
- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
- analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.
- apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications of generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

## TUTORIAL PRESENTATION

Assessment Type 1: Presentation

Indicative Time on Task 2: 44 hours

**Due: On the day of the scheduled presentation**

**Weighting: 40%**

In the first tutorial of the semester, you will be assigned a tutorial presentation topic by your tutor.

**Please note: you must stage your tutorial presentation on the designated week that has been assigned to you:** for example, if you are assigned the Week 4 Forensic CCTV, then you must stage your presentation in the Week 4 tutorial. Failure to do so will incur the standard Faculty of Arts late submission policy—the only exception to this policy is if a student has submitted a Special Consideration application which has been approved

The tutorial presentation task demonstrates a student's disciplinary knowledge and skills through verbal communication to the class.

For your tutorial presentation you are required to:

1. Select a topic from the tutorial schedule of topics and readings.
2. Identify the key issues and arguments as outlined in the lecture and relevant readings.
3. Evidence and illustrate your presentation of key issues and arguments with relevant audiovisual material, e.g., videos, images, interviews, case studies and so on.
4. In the course of your presentation, you must pose to the class probing questions on the topic's key issues in order to generate engaged discussion.
5. Keep your presentation to 15 minutes maximum time. There is no submission of print material to this assessment task. You will be assessed solely on your in-class presentation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.
- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
- analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.
- apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.
- communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Final Essay</u>	60%	No	07/11/2025 11.55pm
<u>Tutorial Presentation</u>	40%	No	Due on assigned date

### Final Essay

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Essay

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 54 hours

Due: **07/11/2025 11.55pm**

Weighting: **60%**

A formal essay that fulfils the conventions of the academic genre, including critical address of key issues, analytical argumentation and buttressing of all assertions with relevant evidence. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.
- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
- analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.
- apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.
- communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

### Tutorial Presentation

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Presentation

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 44 hours

Due: **Due on assigned date**

Weighting: **40%**

A task that demonstrates a student's disciplinary knowledge and skills through verbal communication to the class. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.
- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
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- communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

<sup>2</sup> Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

## **Delivery and Resources**

**All lectures and tutorials commence in Week 1 of semester.**

This unit includes pre-recorded lectures and online and on-campus tutorials. Please see the timetable for further information.

All lectures will be delivered electronically and will be recorded and made available at the ECHO 360 link on the unit's iLearn site.

An MMCC3031 Forensic Media Reader will be available online from the MQ Library. All required

reading list titles will be available via 'Unit Readings' in

MultiSearch:<http://multisearch.mq.edu.au/?course> and via the Leganto link on the MMCC3031 iLearn site.

## **Unit Schedule**

### **MMCC3031 FORENSIC MEDIA 2025**

#### **Lecture Schedule**

**Week One: Introduction to Forensics and Forensic Media**

**Week Two: Forensic Art and Illustration**

**Week Three: Forensic Drone Media**

**Week Four: Forensic CCTV**

**Week Five: Crime Scenes: Using Forensic Evidence in Nonfiction Writing**

**Week Six: Deathscapes 1: Indigenous Deaths in Custody**

**Week Seven: Deathscapes 2: Asylum Seeker and Refugee Deaths at the Border**

**Week Eight: READING WEEK: NO CLASSES: 15 September to 19 September**

**RECESS: 22 September to 5 October**

**Week Nine: Forensic Genetics and the 'CSI Effect'**

**Week Ten: Geopolitics of Forensic Geospatial Technologies**

**Week Eleven: Forensic Uses of Social Media**

**Week Twelve: Forensic Biometrics**

#### **Tutorial Schedule and Readings**

**Week One: 30 July: Introduction to Forensics and Forensic Media**

##### **Readings:**

Simon A. Cole 2013, 'Forensic Culture as Epistemic Culture: The Sociology of Forensic Science,' *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological Biomedical Sciences*, vol. 44, pp. 36-46.

Greg Siegel 2014, 'Accidents and Forensics,' in Greg Siegel, *Forensic Media*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 1-30.

**Week Two: 6 August: Forensic Art and Illustration**

##### **Readings:**

Joseph Pugliese 2005, "'Demonstrative Evidence": A Genealogy of the Racial Iconography of Forensic Art and Illustration,' *Law and Critique*, vol. 15, pp. 287-320.



Sarah Cascone, "Textbooks Only Depict White Patients. So He Drew His Own Illustrations – and They Went Viral," *Artnet News*, 7 December 2021, [https://news.artnet.com/art-world/diversity-medical-illustrations-chidiebere-ibe-2045122?utm\\_content=from\\_www.artnet.com&utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EU%20NEws%20Afternoon%2012%2F8%2F21&utm\\_term=EUR%20Daily%20Newsletter%20%5BAFTERNOON%5D](https://news.artnet.com/art-world/diversity-medical-illustrations-chidiebere-ibe-2045122?utm_content=from_www.artnet.com&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EU%20NEws%20Afternoon%2012%2F8%2F21&utm_term=EUR%20Daily%20Newsletter%20%5BAFTERNOON%5D)

Shaila Dewan, "With George Floyd, a Raging Debate Over Bias in the Science of Death," *New York Times*, April 14, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/14/us/george-floyd-death-forensic-science.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=US%20News>.

### **Week Three: 13 August: Forensic Drone Media**

#### **Readings:**

James H. Hamilton, 'Drone Journalism as Visual Aggregation: Toward a Critical History,' *Media and Communications*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2020): 64-74.

John V. Pavlik, 'Drones, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality Journalism: Mapping Their Role in Immersive News Content,' *Media and Communications*, vol. 8, no. 3 (2020): 137-146.

Pugliese, J, 2016, "Drone Casino Mimesis: Telewarfare and Civil Militarisation," *Journal of Sociology*, 53.3: 500-521.

### **Week Four: 20 August: Forensic CCTV**

#### **Readings:**

Gary Edmond 2012, 'Just Truth? Carefully Applying History, Philosophy and Sociology of Science to the Forensic Use of CCTV Images,' *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, vol. 44, pp. 80-91.

Katherine Biber 2006, 'The Spectre of Crime: Photography, Law and Ethics,' *Social Semiotics*, vol. 16, pp. 133-149.

### **Week Five: 27 August: Crime Scenes: Using Forensic Evidence in Nonfiction Writing**

#### **Readings:**

Katherine Biber, Peter Doyle and Kate Rossmanith 2014, 'Perving at Crime Scenes: Authenticity, Ethics, Aesthetics: A Conversation', *Griffith Law Review*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 804-814.

Dominick Dunne, 'Justice: A Father's Account of the Trial of his Daughter's Killer', *Vanity Fair*, March 1984

<https://archive.vanityfair.com/article/1984/3/a-fathers-account-of-the-trial-of-his-daughters-killer>

### **Week Six: 3 September: Deathscapes 1: Indigenous Deaths in Custody**

**Readings:** Read two or more cases on Indigenous deaths in custody from the cases available at: <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20201103065140/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/173410/20201103-1648/www.deathscapes.org/index.html>

Hannah McGlade and Stella Tarrant, “Say Her Name’: Naming Aboriginal Women in the Justice System,” in Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese (eds.), *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence*, Routledge ebook @MQ Library, 2022, pp. 106-126.

Bronwyn Carlson, “Data Silence in the Settler Archives: Indigenous Femicide, Deathscapes and Social Media,” in Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese (eds.), *Mapping Deathscapes: Digital Geographies of Racial and Border Violence*, Routledge ebook @MQ Library, 2022, pp. 84-105.

### **Week Seven: 10 September: Deathscapes 2: Asylum Seeker and Refugee Deaths at the Border**

**Readings:** Read two or more cases on asylum seeker and refugee deaths at the border from the cases available at: <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20201103065140/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/173410/20201103-1648/www.deathscapes.org/index.html>

Tony Birch, “The Last Refuge of the ‘Un-Australian,’” in Timothy Neale, Crystal McKinnon, Eve Vincent (eds.), *History, Power, Text: Cultural Studies and Indigenous Studies*, Sydney: UTS ePress, 2014,

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1w36pd7.17>

Perera, Suvendrini and Joseph Pugliese, ‘Repetitions of Violence: On David Dungay’s and Fazel Chegeni Nejad’s Inquests,’ *Overland*, 28 August 2018, <https://overland.org.au/2018/08/repetition-s-of-violence-the-inquests-for-david-dungay-and-fazel-cheheni-nejad/>

Maria Giannacopoulos 2019, ‘Debtscales: Australia’s Constitutional Monopoly,’ *borderlands e-journal*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 1-16.

### **Week 8: READING WEEK: NO CLASSES: 15 September to 19 September**

#### **RECESS: 22 September to 5 October**

### **Week Nine: 8 October: Forensic Genetics and the ‘CSI Effect’**

#### **Readings:**

Barbara L. Ley, Natalie Jankowski and Paul R. Brewer 2012, ‘Investigating CSI: Portrayals of DNA Testing on a Forensic Crime Show and Their Potential Effect,’ *Public Understanding of Science*, vol. 21, pp. 51-67.

Simon A. Cole 2013, ‘A Surfeit of Science: The “CSI Effect” and the Media Appropriation of the Public Understanding of Science,’ *Public Understanding of Science*, vol. 0, pp. 1-17.

Pugliese, J, 1999, “Identity in Question: A Grammatology of DNA and Forensic Genetics,”

*International Journal for the Semiotics of Law/Revue Internationale de Sémiotique Juridique*, 12.4: 414-444.

## **Week Ten: 15 October: Geopolitics of Forensic Geospatial Technologies**

### **Readings:**

David Campbell 2007, 'Geopolitics and Visuality: Sighting the Darfur Conflict,' *Political Geography*, vol. 26, pp. 357-382.

Lisa Parks 2009, 'Digging Into Google Earth: An Analysis of "Crisis in Darfur,"' *Geoforum*, vol. 40, pp. 535-545.

Joseph Pugliese 2013, 'Technologies of Extraterritorialisation, Statist Visuality and Irregular Migrants and Refugees,' *Griffith Law Review*, vol. 22, pp. 571-597.

## **Week Eleven: 22 October: Forensic Uses of Social Media**

### **Readings:**

Bronwyn Carlson and Jeff Berglund, "Introduction," in B. Carlson and J. Berglund (eds.), *Indigenous People Rise Up: The Global Ascendancy of Social Media Activism*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2021, pp. 1-13.

Stuart Middleton, Lee Middleton and Stefano Modafieri 2014, 'Real-Time Crisis Mapping of Natural Disasters Using Social Media,' *Social Intelligence and Technology*, March/April, pp. 9-17.

Patrick Meier 2011, 'New Information Technologies and Their Impact on the Humanitarian Sector,' *International Review of the Red Cross*, vol. 93, pp. 1239-1263.

Mathew Ingram 2014, 'Social Media has Changed the Way that War Reporting Works – and That's a Good Thing,' *Gigaom*, 28 July, <https://gigaom.com/2014/07/28/social-media-has-changed-the-way-that-war-reporting-works-and-thats-a-good-thing/>.

## **Week Twelve: 29 October: Forensic Biometrics**

### **Readings:**

Kelly Gates 2006, 'Identifying the 9/11 "Faces of Terror,"' *Cultural Studies*, vol. 20, pp. 417-440.

Joseph Pugliese 2005, 'In Silico Race and the Heteronomy of Biometric Proxies: Biometrics in the Context of Civilian Life, Border Security and Counter-Terrorism Laws,' *Australian Feminist Law Journal*, vol. 23, pp. 1-32.

Martin Kevorkian, "Integrated Circuits," in Martin Kevorkian, *Color Monitors: The Black Face of Technology in America*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006, pp. 74-114.

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). 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](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

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

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

## Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 [connect.mq.edu.au](https://connect.mq.edu.au) or if you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto:globalmba.support@mq.edu.au)

## Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

### Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

## Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

## Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

## 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.

Unit information based on version 2025.01R of the **Handbook**