CUL 320
Post 9/11: The Cultural Politics of Terror
D2 2012

Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Goldie Osuri
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Contact via goldie.osuri@mq.edu.au
Y3A 251
Mon 10am-11 am.; 3 pm-4 pm

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
39cp including 3cp in CUL units at 200 level

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit examines the shift in contemporary cultural politics, post 9/11, through post-structural and post-modern theories and debates. Exploring theoretical concepts such as biopolitics and necropolitics, the unit addresses how the war on terror has transformed governmental and media rhetoric and practice, as well as the cultural practices of everyday life.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

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

- Ability to discuss course material
- Ability to learn and engage with discipline-based theoretical concepts
- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events
- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit
Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Analysis Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Report</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Oct. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis Essay</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Nov. 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Class participation
Due: **Ongoing**
Weighting: **10%**

This assessment is based on evaluation of attendance of tutorials, and informed, reading-based class participation. Marks for this assessment will be given at the end of the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Ability to discuss course material

Conceptual Analysis Essay
Due: **Sept. 6**
Weighting: **30%**

This assessment requires an understanding and analysis of theoretical concepts which are part of poststructuralist approaches to the cultural politics of terror. Assignment topics will be handed out in tutorials three weeks before the assignment due date.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Ability to learn and engage with discipline-based theoretical concepts

Media Report
Due: **Oct. 11**
Weighting: **25%**

In this team-based project, groups of 2 or 3 students will use theoretical concepts and apply them to a particular issue or event, part of the 'war on terror', which has been reported by the media. Using media sources, students will need to think through how the media has reported a particular issue or event. Are there any absences in the media reportage of the issue? Do other forms of media provide a different story? Are there any alternate accounts from ‘citizen journalists’ or activist organisations also reporting on the issue? What is your informed opinion on the issue? How can the theoretical concepts that you have learnt in this unit help you and the
team understand the event and its implications? This assignment will be written like a report (you do not have to use an essay form). Using each of the questions outlined above as headings, the report must offer an analysis by using any of the theoretical tools learned in the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events

Critical Analysis Essay

Due: Nov. 15
Weighting: 35%

This assessment provides students with the space to develop critical thinking and writing skills by discussing theoretical concepts learned in the course and linking these concepts to case studies of forms of power consolidated post 9/11. Questions for the final essay and assessment criteria will be provided after the break.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

Delivery and Resources

For lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetable website: http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au. This website will display up-to-date information on your classes and classroom locations.

On-Campus Sessions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>4 - 5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorial 1</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>1- 3 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutorial 2</td>
<td>Mondays</td>
<td>11- 1 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial 3</td>
<td>Tuesdays</td>
<td>4 - 6 p.m.</td>
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</table>
Changes made to unit:
This unit has additional audio-visual material. Lectures are updated every year.

**REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS**

*Post 9-11: The Cultural Politics of Terror* course reader (2012) is the required text for this unit. The course reader is available for purchase at the University Co-op bookshop. A copy of the course reader will be available at the Library Reserve section.

**UNIT WEBPAGE AND TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED**

Online units can be accessed at: [http://www.learn.mq.edu.au](http://www.learn.mq.edu.au)

The unit uses the following technology:

ilecture

**Unit Schedule**

**CUL 320 -- Post 9-11: The Cultural Politics of Terror**

**WEEKLY TOPICS**

**WEEK 1 (JULY 30-31): INTRODUCTION**

Lecture: Introduction to the rationale for the course.

No Tutorials in Week One

**WEEK 2 (AUG 6-7): RECONCEPTUALISING POWER**

Lecture: This week we will look at how the concepts of power have been theorised by the philosopher, Michel Foucault. We will examine how biopower & biopolitics have been conceptualised as a way of thinking about subjectivity through the triangle of sovereign, disciplinary and governmental power.

Seminar Topics: How have biopower and biopolitics been conceptualised by Foucault? How are they related to theories of sovereignty, subjectivity & governmentality?

Readings:


**Recommended Reading:**

**WEEK 3 (AUG 13-14): SOVEREIGNTY AND THE CAMP**

Lecture: How do Foucauldian concepts of biopower and biopolitics manifest themselves in Georgio Agamben’s theorisation of the camp?

Seminar Topics: What is a camp? What is a state of exception? How are they related to biopolitics?

**Readings:**


**Recommended Reading:**


**WEEK 4 (AUG 20 -21): NECROPOLITICS**

Lecture: If Foucault’s concepts of biopower and biopolitics offer a way of thinking through sovereign, disciplinary and governmental power, how does Achille Mbembe’s theory of necropolitics address the notion of colonial biopolitics and biopower?

Seminar Topics: What is necropolitics? How is it related to and how does it differ from Foucault’s conceptualisation of biopower and biopolitics?

**Readings:**


Hage, G 2003, ‘”Comes a Time We Are All Enthusiasm”: Understanding Palestinian Suicide Bombers in Times of Exighophobia’, Public Culture, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 65-89.

**Recommended Readings:**


**WEEK 5 (AUG 27-28): SEPTEMBER 11 AS EVENT AND REPRESENTATION**

Lecture: The attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the U.S. prompted a range of responses from different ideological positions and geographical territories. The attacks are
represented in dominant terms as a turning point in global history. This week we will examine the implications of representing 9/11.

Seminar Topics: What are some of the ways in which the S11 event has been represented? What are the implications of these representations?

Readings:


Fukuyama, F 2002, ‘Has History Started Again’, Policy, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 3-7

**WEEK 6 (SEPT 3-4): NEW WORLD ORDERS I—IMPERIALISMS**

Lecture: Following the events of September 11, governmental leaders and mainstream media began to refer to older Orientalist colonial binaries of civilisation and barbarism. One of the casualties of such a binary has been a careful tracing of the historical legacies of contemporary events. This week we will look at some of the ways in which poststructuralist and postcolonial theories enable us to look at the forms of power that the event of September 11 generated.

Seminar Topics: How do bio & necropolitics inform the strategies that the U.S. government and the Coalition of the Willing were able to formulate? How does peace-keeping function in the context of imperialisms?

Readings:


Recommended Reading:


**WEEK 7 (SEPT 10-11) NEW WORLD ORDERS II-MEDIA CONTESTS**
Lecture: This week we will look at the manner in which the war of images forms an integral part of the war against terrorism. We will look at the manner in which a changing mediascape challenged the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq by the U.S. and its allies.

Seminar Topics: What are the politics of visuality and representation in the war against terror? What were some of the ways in which Al-Jazeera offered a challenge to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq? How did Al-Jazeera expose the discursive support of western medias for the ‘war against terror’?

Readings:


Recommended Reading:


MIDSEMESTER BREAK: SEP 17-SEP 28

WEEK 8—OCTOBER 1-PUBLIC HOLIDAY/READING WEEK

WEEK 9 (OCT 8-9): (neo)colonial orders: the Palestinian struggle

Lecture: This week we will examine the Palestinian struggle and its continuing significance in narratives of terror—pre and post 9/11.

Film Screening: The Land Speaks Arabic

Seminar Topics: How is the Palestinian context situated in the neo-colonial, racial order? How are bodies mapped within geopolitical cartographies?

Readings:


Recommended Reading:


WEEK 10 (OCT 15-16): SPACES OF EXCEPTION: DETENTION & TORTURE

Lecture: What are some of the (il)legal apparatuses of power that are used to incarcerate racialised bodies? What are some of the contemporary discursive ways in which spaces of exception such as Guantanamo were enabled through law? How was torture legitimised in the Bush era? What has happened to torture in the Obama era?

Seminar Topics: How did Guantanamo Bay become a space of exception? How do representations of gender and sexuality inform torture?

Readings:


Recommended Reading:


WEEK 11 (OCT 22-23): GENDER & MULTICULTURAL DISCOURSE POST 9/11

Lecture: This week we will look at some of the ways in which the politics of multiculturalism reveal the limits of multiculturalism itself especially in relation to embodied gendered and racialised identities. We will address some of the power relations which structure these constructions of identities, especially in times of crisis.

Seminar Topics: What are the gendered effects of the war on terror?

Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Unit guide CUL 320 Post 9/11: The Cultural Politics of Terror


Week 12 (Oct 29-30): The Post 9/11 Film

Lecture: This week we will look at some ways in which post 9/11 popular cultural films have treated the events of September 11.


Week 13 (Nov 5-6): Wrap Up

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://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html
Special Consideration Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/special_consideration/policy.html

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

UNIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

In this unit, you will be expected to attend lectures. Tutorial attendance is compulsory. Missing more than three tutorials (without the permission of lecturer or tutor) will automatically result in a ‘fail’ grade. This policy will be rigorously applied to the tutorials.

Students are expected to read the unit readings every week and come to class prepared to engage in discussion. Students are also required to submit all assessments.

It is the student’s responsibility to inform the tutor or lecturer in case he or she is unable to attend. In case of an unforeseen circumstance, please contact the tutor or lecturer as soon as possible. In case of a medical condition or illness, please bring a medical certificate. Attendance records will be kept at tutorials.

If a student misses more than three tutorials due to a valid unforeseen emergency or illness, he or she may request the lecturer or tutor to submit an additional assignment. However, this decision is at the
discretion of the tutor or lecturer. Please do not assume the submission of an additional assignment as a right.

Student Support
Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at: [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/).

UniWISE provides:
- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops [http://www.mq.edu.au/learning_skills/](http://www.mq.edu.au/learning_skills/)
- Personal assistance with your learning & study related questions.
- The Learning Help Desk is located in the Library foyer (level 2).
- Online and on-campus orientation events run by Mentors@Macquarie.

Student Enquiry Service
Details of these services can be accessed at [http://www.student.mq.edu.au/ses/](http://www.student.mq.edu.au/ses/).

Equity Support
Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Unit who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

IT Help
If you wish to receive IT help, we would be glad to assist you at [http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/](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 and it outlines what can be done.

Graduate Capabilities

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

- Ability to learn and engage with discipline-based theoretical concepts
- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events
- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

Assessment tasks

- Conceptual Analysis Essay
- Media Report
- Critical Analysis 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

- Ability to discuss course material
- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events
- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

Assessment tasks

- Media Report
- Critical Analysis 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:
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**

- Ability to discuss course material
- Ability to learn and engage with discipline-based theoretical concepts
- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events
- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

**Assessment tasks**

- Class participation
- Conceptual Analysis Essay
- Media Report
- Critical Analysis 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**

- Ability to demonstrate critical literacy in relation to relevant mediated representational events
- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of
theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

**Assessment tasks**

- Media Report
- Critical Analysis 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 outcome**

- Ability to demonstrate critical and ethical research-based skills in application of theoretical concepts to debates or events relevant to the unit

**Assessment task**

- Critical Analysis Essay