MAS 331
Modernism, Postmodernism and Beyond
S1 Day 2013

Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Tasks</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery and Resources</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Schedule</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Capabilities</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Ian Collinson
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Credit points
3

Prerequisites
39cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit examines various general theories of modernism and post-modernism while considering the historical context. This unit analyses post-modernism through a study of contemporary art, media and popular culture.

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:

Students will have a greater understanding of modernism and postmodernism's contribution to the history of twentieth-century art, media and culture.
Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding modernism and postmodernism.
Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.
Students will have had an opportunity to improve their critical and analytical writing skills.
Students will have had an opportunity to extend their oral communcation skills.
## Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Short Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 7 tutorial (8 April)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student-Led Tutorial</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>In tutorials (Weeks 7-13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Essay 2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Week 12 tutorial (27 May)</td>
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### 4. Participation

**Due:** Continuous  
**Weighting:** 10%

Students will be expected to be active and make informed contributions to tutorials.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Students will have a greater understanding of modernism and postmodernism's contribution to the history of twentieth-century art, media and culture.
- Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding modernism and postmodernism.
- Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.
- Students will have had an opportunity to extend their oral communication skills.

### 1. Short Essay

**Due:** Week 7 tutorial (8 April)  
**Weighting:** 15%

Word Limit: 1,000 words.

Research requirements: You must cite a minimum of 7 readings from Weeks 2-5. You are obviously encouraged to use more should you feel that your argument and analysis would benefit. No research beyond the unit reader is required for this assessment.

**Question:**

What is the relationship between modernism and postmodernism? You may, if you wish, refer to creative practitioners who are representative of modernism and postmodernism, or who problematise the distinction.

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• Students will have had an opportunity to improve their critical and analytical writing skills.

2. Student-Led Tutorial

Due: In tutorials (Weeks 7-13)
Weighting: 25%

Between Weeks 7 and 13 you will lead a tutorial with either one or two classmates, depending on the size of your tutorial.

Your task is to stimulate class discussion, and guide that discussion. This task is not to be confused with a more formal presentation. The accent here is not on slick presentation skills but the generation of discussion about the complex issues that MAS331 will throw-up every week—nothing about modernism and postmodernism is straightforward or uncontested, so these sessions are important to you and your classmates’ overall understanding.

You and your classmate(s) will have to plan the session together and coordinate classroom activities. Focus questions will be available in ILearn, however these questions are only a starting point. You are also expected to devise your own questions and class activities and to anchor your discussion with particular media examples. Any activity that involves the discussion and analysis of issues relating to the week’s readings and lecture topic is suitable.

There will be opportunities to further discuss the requirements of this assignment in your tutorial.

On successful completion you will be able to:
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• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.
• Students will have had an opportunity to improve their critical and analytical writing skills.

3. Essay 2

Due: Week 12 tutorial (27 May)
Weighting: 50%
Word limit: 2,000 words.

Research requirements: minimum of ten academic sources, six of which must be taken from the unit reader. As with the first essay, you may use more than the minimum if you wish. If you are uncertain where to start your research please look at the recommended reading list in Ilearn.

Choose one of the following questions:

1. Using the work of two artists/writers etc working in different media, critically discuss the similarities and differences in postmodern aesthetics as they are manifest across two cultural/media forms. (NB: You cannot discuss an artist or work covered in your tutorial presentation.)

2. What do you consider to be the single most significant aspect of postmodernism? Discuss with reference to the influential theorists of postmodernism.

3. Is postmodernism dead? If so, how can this new cultural condition be described? Have we entered a ‘post-postmodern’ age?

4. Analyse the body of work of one artist/writer/director/photographer etc whom you consider ‘post-postmodern’. How is this body of work post-postmodern? (Note: a 'body of work' in this instance refers to the overall output of a particular artist. Therefore, you will need to discuss at least three individual texts by your chosen writer, photographer, director etc.).

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Students will have a greater understanding of modernism and postmodernism’s contribution to the history of twentieth-century art, media and culture.

• Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding modernism and postmodernism.

• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.

• Students will have had an opportunity to improve their critical and analytical writing skills.

Delivery and Resources

A Unit Reader will be available from the Co-op Bookshop.

Lectures will be available through ilearn and all essays are to be submitted to Turnitin.

There are no changes in unit content this year. MAS331 was updated in 2012 with a greater emphasis placed on the growing discussion about the end of postmodernism. A new lecture about 'low modernism' (the way that popular cultural and media forms mediated people’s experience of the modern world during the first half of the twentieth-century) was going to be added in 2013 but the loss of Week 6 to a public holiday made this impractical. There has however been a change to assessment waiting with a greater emphasis placed upon the major research assignment.
Unit Schedule

Week 1  INTRODUCTION TO MODERNISM, POSTMODERNISM AND BEYOND
Week 2  “Shifting Sands”: MODERNITY, MODERNISM, MODERNISATION
Week 3  “Making it New”: MODERNISM & THE AVANT-GARDE
Week 4  "All Change": FROM MODERNISM To POSTMODERNISM
Week 5  "What is Postmodernism?": CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTMODERNISM

Due to a public holiday there are no lectures or tutorials in Week 6

Week 7  "Of Metanarratives, Pastiche and the Hyper-real": THEORIES OF POSTMODERNISM
Week 8  Postmodern Culture (1): SCREEN
Week 9  Postmodern Culture (2): POPULAR MUSIC
Week 10 Postmodern Culture (3): WRITING
Week 11 Postmodern Culture (4): PHOTOGRAPHY
Week 12 "Postmodernism 1970-1990": THE DEATH OF POSTMODERNISM?
Week 13 "What's Next?: THEORISING POST-POSTMODERNISM

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:


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

UniWISE provides:

- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/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/.

Equity Support

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

IT Help

If you wish to receive IT help, we would be glad to assist you at 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

- Students will have a greater understanding of modernism and postmodernism's contribution to the history of twentieth-century art, media and culture.
- Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding
modernism and postmodernism.

• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.

Assessment tasks

• 4. Participation
• 1. Short Essay
• 2. Student-Led Tutorial
• 3. Essay 2

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

• Students will have a greater understanding of modernism and postmodernism’s contribution to the history of twentieth-century art, media and culture.
• Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding modernism and postmodernism.
• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.

Assessment tasks

• 4. Participation
• 1. Short Essay
• 2. Student-Led Tutorial
• 3. Essay 2

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

• Students will have a critical knowledge of the key concepts and contentions surrounding modernism and postmodernism.
• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.

Assessment tasks

• 4. Participation
• 1. Short Essay
• 2. Student-Led Tutorial
• 3. Essay 2

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

• Students will have developed an ability to analyse, evaluate and critique concepts germane to modernism and postmodernism as they manifest across a range of media.

Assessment tasks

• 4. Participation
• 2. Student-Led Tutorial

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

• Students will have had an opportunity to improve their critical and analytical writing skills.
• Students will have had an opportunity to extend their oral communication skills.
Assessment tasks

• 4. Participation
• 1. Short Essay
• 2. Student-Led Tutorial
• 3. Essay 2