



SOC 279

Sociology of Media

S1 Day 2018

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Justine Lloyd

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp at 100 level or above

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 you will examine questions such as: How do new media technologies impact society? How are media shaped by social structures? Is watching television a ritual activity? What kinds of community are possible via the internet? These topics are used to illustrate how key concepts in sociology – such as change, modernity, self, community, and sociability – can be applied to the study of media contexts.

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:

developing an understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life

critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society

ability to identify and discuss key terms in the sociology of the media

research skills through the planning and construction of a major essay in the sociology of

the media and competency around the construction and presentation of a cohesive argument
capacity for critical engagement with other students' ideas through structured discussions

General Assessment Information

This unit gives you an opportunity to build towards a major piece of research and writing, the 2000-word research essay.

All assessment tasks are linked and relate to the lecture and tutorial content. The lectures and tutorials are based on the essential weekly readings (available as a hard copy reader via the Co-op bookshop, or electronically via the University library). You are expected to read and take notes on the weekly readings before attending the tutorials.

Lectures are designed to give an overview of the weekly topics and the overall course theme of sociological approaches to the relationship between media and society.

Your participation mark will relate to the level of preparation you demonstrate, your contribution to group discussions based on these inter-related elements of the course, and your engagement with others' ideas.

If you have any concerns about tutorial participation, please speak to the unit convenor as early as possible.

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|--|-----------|--------|---------------------|
| Tutorial Participation | 20% | No | Ongoing |
| Reflection on Weekly Responses | 20% | No | Beginning Week 5 |
| Essay Plan | 20% | No | Beginning of Week 9 |
| Research Essay | 40% | No | End of Week 13 |

Tutorial Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

In class response to set readings, 5 minutes max (2-3 students per week), beginning in week 5.

As well as regular, general participation in the discussion based on the weekly readings, you will participate in group work during the tutorials. This will involve structured discussion and exercises. Your overall mark for the task will reflect your preparation for tutorials, as well as your engagement with the in-class exercises.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- capacity for critical engagement with other students' ideas through structured discussions

Reflection on Weekly Responses

Due: **Beginning Week 5**

Weighting: **20%**

Two pages (500 words) reflection on a chosen reading from first four weeks of semester, addressing the following questions:

Q: How has this author understood the relationship between media and society? What tradition does this author advance in their analysis and how can their argument be contrasted with other approaches?

For further details on this assignment please see the expanded **Course Notes** available on the SOC 279 Ilearn site.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Essay Plan

Due: **Beginning of Week 9**

Weighting: **20%**

Essay plan should be maximum of 500 words (2 pages) and provide a preliminary list of readings you wish to consult (not included in the word count).

This exercise is designed to give you the opportunity to develop a focused response to your chosen question and to get feedback on an outline of your approach to the essay. You may set it out as dot-points, or as a brief capsule summary of your ideas.

For further information and instructions on this assignment, please see the expanded **Course**

Notes, available on the SOC 279 ilearn web site.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- developing an understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- ability to identify and discuss key terms in the sociology of the media
- research skills through the planning and construction of a major essay in the sociology of the media and competency around the construction and presentation of a cohesive argument

Research Essay

Due: **End of Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

An original research essay (2000 words) on a set topic covering themes and issues discussed in the course.

For a list of topics and marking criteria for the essay, please see the expanded **Course Notes** available on the SOC 279 ilearn web site.

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- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
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Delivery and Resources

In this unit attendance at lectures and tutorials is essential for successful completion of the course.

Please consult the timetable for the latest information on lecture and tutorial times and locations.

You will need to enrol in one of the tutorial sessions.

You will also need access to the internet to access the ilearn site for SOC279.

All of the Essential Readings for this unit are contained in the SOC279 SOCIOLOGY OF MEDIA COURSE READER. The tutorial program is based on it, and the lectures will often refer to it as well. The Reader is available on demand from the co-op bookshop.

Unit Schedule

| WEEK | LECTURE TOPIC |
|---|--|
| Week 1 | Introduction to Media Sociology/New Media |
| Week 2 | Sociological Approaches to Media |
| Week 3 | Media Communications and Social Change I |
| Week 4 | Media Communications and Social Change II |
| Reflection on reading assignment (weeks 1-4) | due 10am Monday 26 March (beginning of Week 5) |
| Week 5 | Mediated Interaction |
| Week 6 | EASTER MONDAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY: No Lecture or Tutorials |
| Week 7 | Case study: Political Economy of Media |
| | Mid-semester break: 16-27 April: Self-directed study for essay plan |
| Week 8 | Case study: Racism & Ethnicity |
| Week 9 | Case study: Gender |
| Essay Plan Assignment | Due 10am Monday 9 May (beginning of Week 9) |
| Week 10 | Case study: Accessibility/Disability |
| Week 11 | No lecture: Reading week incl. Individual consultation with lecturer/tutor on your essay plan (during week 10 you will have made an appointment to collect your plan in person during the consultation time this week) |
| Week 12 | No lecture: Reading week incl. Individual consultations not conducted in Week 11. |
| Major Essay | due 5pm Friday 9 June (end of Week 13) |

Policies and Procedures

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](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>).

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.

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 outcomes

- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
- research skills through the planning and construction of a major essay in the sociology of the media and competency around the construction and presentation of a cohesive argument

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Reflection on Weekly Responses
- 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

- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
- capacity for critical engagement with other students' ideas through structured discussions

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Reflection on Weekly Responses

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

- developing an understanding of debates about communication media and how they shape social life
- ability to identify and discuss key terms in the sociology of the media

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Weekly Responses
- 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

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- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
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Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Reflection on 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

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- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
- research skills through the planning and construction of a major essay in the sociology of the media and competency around the construction and presentation of a cohesive argument

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Reflection on 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

- critical thinking through application of different sociological approaches, both theoretical and empirical, to the study of media and society
- research skills through the planning and construction of a major essay in the sociology of the media and competency around the construction and presentation of a cohesive argument
- capacity for critical engagement with other students' ideas through structured discussions

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Participation
- Reflection on 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 outcome

- capacity for critical engagement with other students' ideas through structured discussions

Assessment task

- Research Essay

Changes from Previous Offering

In response to student feedback, the following changes were made in 2016 and 2017:

- lecture time was shortened to one-hour;
- new readings were added for weeks 6 & 7;
- a new topic was added for week 7, which updates the case study approach with recent research;
- the reading reflection assignment was changed to make the word length longer and provide clearer questions to guide student responses to the set readings.

The lecturer and tutor wish to thank all students who contributed to this process for their ongoing input and thoughtful ideas.

The unit has also benefited greatly from feedback from other lecturers and tutors each year, especially Dr Alison Leitch (in 2013), Dr Justine Humphry (2010), Dr Paul Byron (2009 & 2011) & Dr John Budarick (2008).

Changes since First Published

| Date | Description |
|------------|--|
| 13/02/2018 | Error in due date of 'Essay Plan' Assignment corrected in unit schedule. |