MMCS260

Documentary Media: Forms, Histories, Futures

S2 Day 2018

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

Contents

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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Credit points
3

Prerequisites
15cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit examines the historical development of documentary and its current relationship to rapidly proliferating digital technologies across a range of formats – including radio, television, cinema and online. From its first gestures in the early twentieth century in radio and film to current multimedia experiments online, the documentary has proved to be a resilient and compelling form. The unit considers the implication of documentary's aesthetic and rhetorical strategies in fashioning our relationship to the real and its corresponding status as a way of knowing and of experiencing the world. It exposes students to this large body of work and the critical writing surrounding it. A range of works, authors and forms are considered with critical attention given to the discussions, dialogues and debates that have surrounded their production, reception and broader influence within societies and within media cultures. Themes covered include questions of style/form, auteurship and notions of authenticity; development of the documentary idea within film/video culture and public service radio; changing concepts and notions of the real and the intersection of creative ideas, industry, new technologies and the hybridisation of forms on the documentary text as it now moves into a post broadcast or convergent and online future.

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:

Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works

Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.

Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.

Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

General Assessment Information

Late assignments

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 (including weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Please note the MMCCS Session Re-mark Application link: http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Tutorial Presentation	15%	No	Designated Week
Short Essay	25%	No	Sept 7
Major Essay	50%	No	Monday 12 November
Participation: Pop Quiz	10%	No	TBA

Tutorial Presentation

Due: **Designated Week**
Weighting: **15%**

Drawing on the required readings, each week two students will present a 5-8 minute critical response to a documentary work screened or broadcast in the unit the previous week. The individual presentations will focus on either the historical context of the documentary work's production *or* the modality or approach adopted by the filmmaker. This assignment is intended to develop students' skills in relation to critically responding to, analysing and discussing documentary works and it is expected that you will have read the relevant supporting critical material noted for each week in iLearn and available in the library or via iLearn. Although this is an oral presentation you may draw on or speak to notes you have prepared for the assignment. A tutorial discussion moderated by your tutor will follow your presentation where you will be expected to take a leading role.

Assessment Criteria

Demonstrated ability to critically respond to audio/audiovisual documentary works

Demonstrated ability to relate critical ideas to creative works

Communication skills

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works
- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.

Short Essay

Due: **Sept 7**
Weighting: **25%**

This assignment is a short essay of 1200 words (excluding references). The assignment is designed to assist you to develop your abilities in both summarising critical ideas about the documentary form and relating these ideas to specific works of your choosing. For the essay you will select and focus on a creative work or works scheduled and to be viewed/auditioned in one of weeks 1-7 together with a key reading you select from critical materials provided in your unit reader for those weeks. Summarise and reflect on the ideas in the reading and discuss/analyse the creative work you have selected in the context of these ideas.

Assessment Criteria

Demonstrated ability to summarise critical ideas relating to the documentary form

Demonstrated ability to analyse the documentary form in the context of critical ideas about the form

Demonstrated ability to structure ideas and argument in a written essay

Clarity of written style and appropriate referencing

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works

- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.

- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.

Major Essay

Due: **Monday 12 November**
Weighting: **50%**

In this assignment you will build on the critical, analytical and reflective skills you began to develop in your earlier written assignment and in your tutorial presentation. Here you are asked to select a minimum of one or a maximum of two documentary works - audio or audiovisual - from the creative corpus presented during this unit.

In an essay of 2500 words (excluding references) you are asked to critically reflect on and discuss each work(s) drawing on key terms of analysis offered during the course. If you wish to discuss only one documentary work, it must be selected from those films or audio programs set for each week for student viewing and or auditioning. Should you wish to critically analyse two documentaries, the second work may be drawn from those set each week (in the schedule), *or* it can be a documentary discussed or referenced during the unit in lectures or tutorials. NB: You may not select only one documentary that you have already presented on in your tutorial, or that you have written about in your short essay. In your analysis you should draw on your weekly set readings, and the reading list supplied. Other critical materials that you may have researched yourself can also be incorporated.

Themes that you might discuss include: the historical development of the documentary form; documentary's relationship to digital technologies; documentary's rhetorical strategies and how they shape our perception of the 'real'; documentary as a way of 'knowing' or interacting with the world; notions of authenticity, authorship, point of view, voice; documentary and social change; new technologies; hybridisation; documentary as an expressive or experimental form; the meeting between reality and fiction. Further relevant concepts, themes will be available on iLearn during semester.

Assessment Criteria

Demonstrated ability to critically analyse and reflect on audio and/or audiovisual documentary

works utilising key documentary terms of analysis and themes.

Demonstrated ability to structure and develop ideas and arguments about the documentary form in a written essay.

Clarity of written style and appropriate referencing.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works
- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.
- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.
- Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

Participation: Pop Quiz

Due: **TBA**
Weighting: **10%**

Your participation in the unit will be gauged through one random pop quizz worth a total of 10%.

The pop quizz will take place in a tutorial during semester to be determined by your lecturers. The quiz will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and the focus will relate to the unit's readings, lectures and set screenings/auditionings.

Assessment Criteria

Demonstrated knowledge and comprehension of concepts, history and modes of documentary as offered in the unit's readings, lectures and screenings.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works
- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.

Delivery and Resources

Technology used in this unit

Films are projected and/or audio programs broadcast are included as excerpts in most lectures. Students however must locate the set screenings or broadcasts/audio for each week via the library link or links available on iLearn. Occasionally a temporary link will be available on iLearn

for just the week of the screening/auditioning.

Changes from previous offerings

Assessment tasks have been reviewed and amended as part of ongoing review of the unit.

Lectures and Tutorials

Attendance at lectures (in person or via Echolecture) and tutorials in person is strongly recommended.

Absences from a tutorial for reasons of illness etc should be communicated to the tutor and appropriate approval process followed for Special Consideration.

NB: Lectures start Week 1. Tutorials start in Week 2.

Assignments

All written assignments are to be delivered as e-copy **and uploaded as preferably a word Document** via Turnitin.

Extensions for assignments are only granted on the grounds of illness or misadventure and appropriate supporting documentation must be submitted via Special Consideration process. If you are having problems please speak to your tutor as soon as possible.

Marked work will be available via Turnitin.

Required Readings

MMCS260 Unit Readings will be available via Library links or information given on iLearn to locate the reading. There may be rare occasions where Readings are available on iLearn.

Recommended books

Nichols, B., Introduction to Documentary, Indiana University Press: Bloomington 2001.

Nichols, B., Representing Reality - Issues and Concepts in Documentary, Indiana University Press: Bloomington 1991.

Aufderheide, P., Documentary Film - a Very Short Introduction, OUP: New York 2007.

Renov, M., (ed.) Theorising Documentary, Routledge: NY 1993.

Bruzzi, S., New Documentary - A Critical Introduction, Routledge: NY 2000.

AUDIO documentary and non fiction works for radio and podcast: some key sites

Australian work:

ABC Radio National (RN) continues to broadcast and podcast radio documentary and non fiction work of high standard: try

Earshot: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/earshot/

Earlier now archived programs with radio features and creative documentary work:

Elsewhere Archive: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/archived/elsewhere/past-programs/

Sound Music Word Archive: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/archived/soundmusicword/past-programs/

SoundProof archive: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/archived/soundproof/features/from-the-vault/

Radio Eye Archive: Radio Eye archive: http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/archived/radioeye/past-programs/

See also RadioDoc Review for critical reviews and essays on radio documentary: RadioDoc Review: http://ro.uow.edu.au/rdr/

British work

BBC: BBC World service, Radio 4 and Radio 3 are the main sites for long form documentary work in radio. Try these, or specific programs like

BBC Radio 4 Seriously...: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02pc9qx

BBC Radio 3 Short Cuts: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01mk3f8

BBC The documentary Podcast: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02nq0lx

Some archived older radio documentaries may be available here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qmtp/episodes/guide

Irish (and international work)

https://www.rte.ie/radio1/doconone/2009/0428/645964-about/

American work:

Try Third Coast International Audio Festival: https://www.thirdcoastfestival.org/

And https://www.thirdcoastfestival.org/overview/library/all/newest/any

Try https://www.prx.org/

Try https://www.radiotopia.fm/

Hearing Voices: https://hearingvoices.com/

New American Radio: http://www.somewhere.org/

Canadian work:

http://www.cbc.ca/radio/docproject

Other

International Features conference

https://ifc2.wordpress.com/

Viewing/Screenings scheduled between Week 2 and 7 and available either via Library or online.

Nanook of the North (Robert Flaherty, 1922)

Titicut Follies (Frederick Wiseman, 1967)

Watching the Detectives (Chris Kennedy, 2017)

77sqm_9:26min (Forensic Architecture, 2017). Available at https://vimeo.com/220840144

Leviathan (Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel, 2012)

Please See iLearn Schedule for full list of screenings and listenings. There may be changes to this information. Please check with Lecturers.

Unit Schedule

Please see iLearn for full unit schedule.

The Course is presented by MMCS staff, Dr Virginia Madsen and Dr Stefan Solomon. Dr Solomon will be presenting the first 7 weeks lectures and has prepared Screenings and Readings for this part of the unit. Dr Madsen will present Week 8 - 13 and these weeks will include screenings and audio presentations (radio documentaries and features). Both sections will engage with historical and more recent material.

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). 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). 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).

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

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

- Describe the historical production context of both early and contemporary audio and audiovisual documentary works
- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.
- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.
- Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Presentation
- Short Essay
- Major Essay
- Participation: Pop Quiz

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

- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.

- Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Presentation
- Short Essay
- Major 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

- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.
- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual non-fiction works.
- Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

Assessment tasks

- Short Essay
- Major 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

- Distinguish and identify key modes relating to both historical and contemporary documentary production.
- Apply key documentary concepts in the analysis of a range of audio and audiovisual

non-fiction works.

- Evaluate and reflect on the relationship of current trends in audio and audiovisual documentary works to the contemporary digital environment.

Assessment tasks

- Tutorial Presentation
- Short Essay
- Major Essay
- Participation: Pop Quiz