

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, FILM, THEATRE AND MEDIA STUDIES

MDIA 208 – MEDIA AUDIENCES

TRIMESTER 1, 2008

COURSE GUIDE

Lecturers

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Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Postal address

Media Studies Programme

School of English, Film, Theatre and Media Studies

Victoria University of Wellington

PO Box 600

Wellington

Class times

Lectures: Wednesday 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon in EA LT206

Tutorials:

1. Thursday 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. in MY 631
2. Thursday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. in MY 631
3. Friday 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. in MY 403
4. Friday 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon in MY 403

Tutorials start in week 2. Students have the opportunity to enrol in one of these tutorials during the first lecture. Tutorial lists will be posted on the Blackboard site and the notice board in the Media Studies building (42-44 KP) on Monday 3 March.

Course aims

In this course we address the most important theories and debates about media audiences. We focus on the cultural studies paradigm, which analyses media use in the context of everyday life and sees audience members as active interpreters of the media they consume. We pay attention to existing research into several 'interpretive communities' and introduce a diverse set of methodologies for audience research.

In the first half of the course we analyse the different ways in which audiences have been conceptualised in public debates and academic research. Students are invited to critically examine the different paradigms used to make sense of media audiences. In the second half of the course we take a closer look at research into 'actual audiences', which analyses how particular identities (gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality) play a role in media consumption. Students will also take part in an audience study themselves. They will conduct, analyse, and report on interviews for one of their assignments.

Course objectives

Having passed this course, students will:

1. be familiar with the key public and academic debates about media audiences
2. be familiar with the most important research into actual media audiences
3. be able to independently conduct and report on a small-scale audience study
4. be able to demonstrate critical analytical skills in relation to media audiences

Course philosophy

Both lecturers will put maximum effort into teaching at a high level. In return, you are asked to actively engage in this course. That involves, in our view: attending all lectures and tutorials, reading the required texts on a weekly basis, actively searching for more information about topics that interest you, preparing questions for tutorials, engaging in discussions inside and outside tutorials, and aiming to perform at your best in the assignments.

Workload

The course is designed on the assumption that students will commit an average of 15 hours a week to the course, which includes attending lectures and tutorials, reading the required readings and additional literature, and working on the assignments.

Additional information

There is a Blackboard site for this course, which we will use for announcements and additional course information, such as a selection of slides from the lectures (these contain key points of a lecture, but do not replace your own notes), tutorial exercises, assignments, guidelines on essay writing, and links to related websites.

Lecture and tutorial outline

Week	Lecture theme	Lecture date	Tut. no.	Tutorial date
Week 1	Audience Paradigms	27 February		
Week 2	The Effects Debate	5 March	1	6/7 March
Week 3	Active Audiences	12 March	2	13/14 March
Week 4	Fan Audiences	19 March	3	20 March *
Week 5	Soap Audiences	26 March	4	27/28 March
Week 6	Audience Research	2 April	5	3/4 April
Week 7	Interviewing	9 April	6	10/11 April
Mid-trimester break: Interviewing				
Week 8	Audiences and Gender	30 April	7	1/2 May
Week 9	Audiences and Sexuality	7 May	8	8/9 May
Week 10	Audiences and Race	14 May	9	15/16 May
Week 11	Children as Audiences	21 May	10	22/23 May
Week 12	Diasporic Audiences	28 May	11	29/30 May
* No tutorials on Friday 21 March. Extra tutorials will be organised on Thursday 20 March.				

Reading list

The chapters and articles below are required readings. They can be found in the MDIA 208 – Media Audiences course reader, available at the Student Notes Shop.

Week 1: Audience Paradigms

- Kothari, Shuchi (2004). 'Questioning the Audience'. In Luke Goode & Nabeel Zuberi (Eds.), *Media Studies in Aotearoa / New Zealand* (pp. 46-58). Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand.
- Lealand, Geoff (2001). 'Ratings and More Damn Ratings: Measuring Television Viewing in New Zealand'. In John Farnsworth & Ian Hutchinson (Eds.), *New Zealand Television: A Reader* (pp. 291-309). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Week 2: The Effects Debate

- Bushman, Brad J. & Craig A. Anderson (2001). 'Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation', *American Psychologist* 56(6/7): 477-489.
- Barker, Martin & Julian Petley (2001). 'Introduction: From Bad Research to Good – A Guide for the Perplexed'. In Martin Barker & Julian Petley (Eds.), *Ill Effects: The Media/Violence Debate* (pp. 1-26). London: Routledge.
- Hill, Annette (2001). "'Looks Like It Hurts': Women's Responses to Shocking Entertainment'. In Martin Barker & Julian Petley (Eds.), *Ill Effects: The Media / Violence Debate* (pp. 135-149). London: Routledge.

Week 3: Active Audiences

- Morley, David (1992). *Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies*. London: Routledge. → Chapter 3: 'Interpreting Television: The Nationwide Audience' and Chapter 6: 'The Gendered Framework of Family Viewing'.

Week 4: Fan Audiences

- Jensen, Joli (1992). 'Fandom as Pathology: The Consequences of Characterization'. In Lisa A. Lewis (Ed.), *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media* (pp. 9-29). London: Routledge.
- Pullen, Kirsten (2004). 'I-love-Xena.com: Creating Online Fan Communities'. In David Gauntlett (Ed.), *Web.Studies: Rewiring Media Studies for the Digital Age* (pp. 52-59). London: Arnold.
- Jenkins, Henry (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press. → Chapter 1: 'Spoiling *Survivor*: The Anatomy of a Knowledge Community'.

Week 5: Soap Audiences

- Ang, Ien (1985). *Watching Dallas: Soap Opera and the Melodramatic Imagination*. London: Routledge. → Chapter 1: 'Dallas Between Reality and Fiction'.
- Baym, Nancy K. (2000). *Tune In, Log On: Soaps, Fandom, and Online Community*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. → Chapter 1: 'The Soap Opera and Its Audience: TV for the Less Intelligent?'.

Weeks 6 and 7: Audience Research and Interviewing

- Schrøder, Kim, Kirsten Drotner, Stephen Kline & Catherine Murray (2003). *Researching Audiences*. London: Arnold. → Chapter 2: 'The History and Divisions of Audience Research: The Received View' and Chapter 9: 'The Reception Research Toolbox: The Qualitative Interview'.

Week 8: Audiences and Gender

- Cooper, Brenda (1999). 'The Relevancy and Gender Identity in Spectator's Interpretations of *Thelma & Louise*', *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16: 20-41.
- Radway, Janice (2003 [1984]). 'Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature'. In Will Brooker and Deborah Jermyn (Eds.), *The Audience Studies Reader* (pp. 219-225). London: Routledge.
- Abel, Sue (2007). 'Hegemonic Masculinity and/or Post-Feminism: Young Men and Women Read Gender Roles in Advertising'. Paper presented to MEDIANZ Conference, Victoria University of Wellington, 8-10 February 2007.

Week 9: Audiences and Sexuality

- Kehily, Mary Jane (1999). 'More Sugar? Teenage Magazines, Gender Displays and Sexual Learning', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2(1): 65-89.
- Boynton, Petra M. (1999). "'Is That Supposed To Be Sexy?'" Women Discuss Women in "Top Shelf" Magazines', *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 9(6): 449-461.
- Austin, Thomas (1991). "'Desperate To See It': Straight Men Watching *Basic Instinct*". In Melvyn Stokes & Richard Maltby (Eds.), *Identifying Hollywood's Audiences* (pp. 147-161). London: BFI.

Week 10: Audiences and Race

- Lewis, Justin & Sut Jhally (2007). 'Television and the Politics of Representation'. In Charles A. Gallagher (Ed.), *Rethinking the Color Line: Readings in Race and Ethnicity. Third Edition* (pp. 420-432). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Cooper, Brenda (1998). "'The White-Black Fault Line": Relevancy of Race and Racism in Spectators' Experiences of Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*', *Howard Journal of Communication* 9(3): 205-228.
- Park, Ji Hoon, Nadine G. Gabbadon & Ariel R. Chernin (2006). 'Naturalizing Racial Differences Through Comedy: Asian, Black, and White Views on Racial Stereotypes in *Rush Hour 2*'. *Journal of Communication* 56: 157-177.

Week 11: Children as Audiences

- Buckingham, David. (1993). 'Introduction: Young People and the Media'. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Reading Audiences: Young People and the Media* (pp. 1-23). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Davies, Hannah, David Buckingham & Peter Kelley (2000). 'In the Worst Possible Taste: Children, Television and Cultural Value', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 3(1): 5-25.

- Walters, Reece & Wiebe Zwaga (2001). *The Younger Audience: Children and Broadcasting in New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press. → Chapter 1: 'Children and Parents Talk about Children's Television and Radio Use'.

Week 12: Diasporic Audiences

- Gillespie, Marie (1995). *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change*. London: Routledge. → Chapter 3: 'Local Uses of the Media: Negotiating Culture and Identity'.
- Sinclair, John, Audrey Yue, Gay Hawkins, Kee Pookong & Josephine Fox (2001). 'Chinese Cosmopolitanism and Media Use'. In Stuart Cunningham & John Sinclair (Eds.), *Floating Lives. The Media and Asian Diasporas* (pp. 35-36 and pp. 64-90). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Additional readings

The library has many books about media audiences which will be useful for your assignments. Go to the library's website, click on Course Reserve and select MDIA 208 to see which books are on three-day-loan and closed reserve for this course.

Mandatory requirements and assignments

The course is internally assessed. In order to pass, students are required to:

1. attend at least nine tutorials, and
 2. complete all four assignments
- **Assignment 1 (worth 20 %)**
Tutorial exercises and tutorial participation
Tests course objectives 1 and 2
Due: Every week on Tuesday 4:00 p.m. (starting week 2)
 - **Assignment 2 (worth 25 %)**
1500-2000 word essay
Tests course objectives 1 and 4
Due: Monday 31 March 10:00 a.m.
 - **Assignment 3 (worth 30 %)**
3000-5000 word interview report
Tests course objective 3
Due: Monday 12 May 10:00 a.m.
 - **Assignment 4 (worth 25 %)**
1500-2000 word essay
Tests course objectives 2 and 4
Due: Monday 9 June 10:00 a.m.

See below for more information about assignment 1. Detailed instructions regarding the other assignments will be given at appropriate points during the course.

Tutorial exercises and tutorial participation

Tutorial exercises are based on the required readings and lectures and are aimed at increasing your understanding of these and preparing you for tutorial discussion. Tutorials are a vital component of undergraduate study. They provide a forum for collaborative learning in which small groups can discuss issues raised in the readings and lectures. Tutorials can also help you develop communication skills which will be valuable in any postgraduate area of work. Tutorial exercises and participation make up 20 % of the assessment for this course (Assignment 1).

Nine tutorial exercises will be posted to “Tutorial Exercises” on Blackboard over the course of the trimester. To meet the requirements for completing this course you are required to complete **seven** of these. Each exercise should be **400 words**. They are to be uploaded to Blackboard before 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday. This is to allow your tutor time to read them before tutorials. In addition you should bring a printed copy to your tutorial to make further notes on during tutorial discussion.

Each tutorial exercise is worth 2 %. If you have done a reasonable job in completing the exercise you will receive 1 %, if you have done a good job you will receive 2 %. The remaining 6 % of tutorial assessment will be based on tutorial participation. Your attendance will have some relevance here, so if you cannot attend a particular tutorial you should give your tutor a note to explain your absence so that this can be taken into account. To allow tutorial groups to settle down, and for you to become familiar with your fellow students, your tutor, and some of the ideas underlying this course, assessment of tutorial participation will not start until week 4. The criteria for tutorial participation assessment will be discussed in the first and second tutorial.

Submission of the other assignments

Please type your essays and interview report in 12pt with 1.5 or double spacing and leave a reasonable margin for comments for the person marking it. Make sure that your work is carefully proofread to eliminate typing, grammatical and punctuation errors. Students operating at 200-level are expected to be able to write with technical accuracy. Coursework grades may be compromised as a result of a lack of attention to the structure and accuracy of your writing, your referencing of sources, and your provision of a full bibliography.

You will be required to submit both an electronic copy and a printed copy of your essays and interview report. Please submit the electronic copy to Blackboard. We will upload this copy to Turnitin (see below). Hand in the printed copy in the Media Studies dropbox. Don't forget to attach a cover sheet! Assignment cover sheets are available from the Media Studies administrator's office.

Students who require an extension for any of these assignments need to contact their tutor in advance. Extensions will not be given without a medical certificate or similar evidence. Late assignments without an extension will be subject to a daily penalty of 5 % of the assignment's grade.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means no cheating. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words. Note: *It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.* Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalised severely. Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine Turnitin. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting inappropriate referencing, misquotation and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

You need to sign the cover sheet attached to the printed copy of your assignments, indicating that you are aware of the University's policy on plagiarism and that the assignment is all your own work. It is your responsibility to ensure you understand what plagiarism is, and what the University's policy on plagiarism is. Do NOT sign the cover sheet if you do not understand these.

We recognise plagiarism often arises through misunderstandings and through not knowing how to reference material you have used appropriately. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor if you are unsure about how to use and cite material from other sources. The Student Learning Support Service runs workshops on essay writing and how to avoid plagiarism.

General University requirements

More information about general University policies and statutes can be found on the Blackboard site. Click on Course Information and open the relevant document.