

MDIA403: Mass Media and Popular Culture

Trimester 2 2009

Tuesdays 2-4pm KP42, 101

30 Points



TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2009

Last piece of assessment due: 19 October 2009

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

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Room 213, 42-44 Kelburn Parade

Office Hours: Tuesday 10-12, or by appointment.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Tuesdays 2-4pm, KP42 101

Additional screening times will be scheduled in order to allow students to view material in groups. Attending these screenings will not be compulsory, although viewing the assigned material will be. We will discuss times for these screenings in the first week of class and information will be posted on Blackboard.

COURSE CONTENT

This course is an advanced study of a selected form of mass media culture, in the context of the operation of the international cultural industries, especially the media conglomerates. Aspects to be addressed include economic production, authorship of texts, and consumption, especially in relation to issues of globalization and local cultural identity.

In 2009, this course will consider the culture of the home-made in its historical relationship to mass media. We will begin by addressing the concepts of “the mass” and “the popular” before moving to think about the use so-called ordinary people make of mass media and it of them, the links between the home-made and home – domestic and national – and narratives of authenticity and agency, among other subjects.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students passing the course should be able to :

- 1) read and engage critically with theory related to mass media and popular culture in general, and the home-made in particular;
- 2) engage with and apply their reading creatively and appropriately;
- 3) conceive of and pursue independent research projects in a developing area of Media Studies;
- 4) locate their research in relation to more established debates in the field of Media Studies;
- 5) participate in a collegial and focused way in class discussion and debate.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

Students should expect to spend an average of 20+ hours per week on this class over the course of the trimester, for a total of 300 hours. This is standard for a 400 level course.

READINGS

Readings will be made available on the MDIA403 Blackboard site, and will be posted at least two weeks in advance of the relevant class meeting.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All announcements, course readings, additional recommendations for reading, and information related to assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course is conceived primarily as a seminar designed to help students develop their own research interests and skills as readers and writers. This means that it depends on student participation. Students should come to class having completed the readings and prepared to engage thoughtfully with the material and their peers.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

There will be three pieces of assessment for this course. More detailed instructions for each assignment will be distributed during the course.

Assignment one - Critical response to readings (1500-1800 words) : 25% Due: Tuesday, 18 August, 2pm to MDIA dropbox and to Turnitin.

In this assignment you will be asked to respond critically to one or more of the readings assigned for weeks two and three of the course ("Mass" and "Popular"), which form the theoretical basis for our investigation of the "home-made." This assignment tests learning objectives 1, 2, and 4.

Assignment two - Seminar presentation (15 minutes + 1200-1500 words): 25%. Due: In class, from week 5 (11 August) to week 10 (29 September)

For this assignment, you are required to present the research which will develop into your research essay to your colleagues in the form of an oral presentation of 15-20 minutes in length. Preferably, you should exemplify your theoretical stance with a media object classifiable as or otherwise related to the "home-made." Your presentation should be accompanied by a short annotated bibliography to be handed in at the time of the presentation. This assignment tests all of the learning objectives for the class.

Assignment four - Research Essay (4000 words): 50%. Due: Monday, 19 October, 2pm to MDIA dropbox and to Turnitin.

This assignment should be on a topic of your own devising, with close reference to the themes and readings discussed in the course. All topics must be cleared with the course co-ordinator by week 9 at the latest.

This assignment tests learning objectives 1,2,3,and 4.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS

Assignments submitted after the deadline without a written extension will be penalised at a rate of 2% (out of a total of 100) per working day. In other words, if you get 50% for an assignment, after one day your grade will drop to 48%, then 46% the following day etc. Late assignments are likely to receive limited feedback. The weekend counts for one day (i.e. an assignment due on Friday that is submitted on Monday will receive a 2% penalty). Please ensure that you are aware of the time that your assignment is due, as well as the date, as this is the cut-off time utilised in calculating lateness penalties.

Extensions

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Admin Tutor (in MDIA101, 102, 103, and 201), or the Course Co-ordinator (in all other MDIA courses). Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in this course you must submit all pieces of assessment by the due date and attend at least 80% of classes (9/12).

STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course should be typed or prepared on a computer. Please use a 12 point font and leave a margin of about 5cm on the left side for comments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

TURNITIN

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

Instructions on using Turnitin will be provided to the class on Blackboard.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

You should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic/Publications.aspx>

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1 14 Jul. Introduction to course

Week 2 21 Jul. Mass (Media)

Week 3 28 Jul. Popular (Culture)

Week 4 4 Aug. Making Do

Week 5 11 Aug. Taking Part

Assignment two - Seminar presentations begin

Week 6 18 Aug. Collecting

Assignment one – Critical response to readings due, 2pm MDIA dropbox

Mid Trimester Break: Monday 24 August– Friday 4 September 2009

Week 7 8 Sep. The Home Mode

Week 8 15 Sep. Remediation

Week 9 22 Sep. Public / Private

All research topics to be cleared with Minette by today!

Week 10 29 Sep. Home-Space

Assignment two - Seminar presentations end

Week 11 6 Oct. Home/ Homeland

Week 12 13 Oct. Home-made / DIY / Amateur

Assignment three – Research essay due 19 October, 2pm, MDIA dropbox

Study Period: Monday 19 to Friday 23 October 2009

Examination Period: Tuesday 27 October – Sunday 15 November 2009