

MDIA 206 Media and Digital Cultures

Trimester 1 2010

1 March to 4 July 2010

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 1 March 2010 to 4 June 2010

Mid-trimester break: 2 April to 18 April 2010

Study week: 7 June to 11 June 2010

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Dr Angi Buettner	angi.buettner@vuw.ac.nz	463 5070	KP 42 205	Office Hours: Mon 3–4
Richard Shepherd	richard.shepherd@vuw.ac.nz	463 6728	KP 42 103	Office Hours: tba

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Tue 1–3 pm EA LT 206

Tutorials

Thurs 2pm MY 107

Fri 10am MY 404; 11am MY 403; 1pm 42KP 101

COURSE DELIVERY

The two-hour session on Tuesdays consists of a lecture or introduction to the topic, as well as whole-class discussion time. The tutorial hour is the forum where you can ask questions about lecture and reading material as well as discuss essay writing skills, and where you can try out your ideas on others. Tutorials start in week 2. Engagement with course materials and active participation in class discussion is expected.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information relevant to this paper including assessment, information on reading material and resources will be available on Blackboard and updated regularly. Announcements will also be posted. Check this site regularly.

The lecture notes posted on Blackboard are only indicative of the content of the lectures and to complement attendance at lectures.

Your first Blackboard task is to use this forum to sign in to a tutorial. Log on to Blackboard and then select the "Tutorial Enrolment" button and then "Discussion Board" and then follow the instructions.

COURSE CONTENT

This course introduces some of the key arguments and issues discussed in the rapidly developing field of new media studies. We examine how digital technologies (such as the Internet, digital music, video games) are transforming contemporary culture and everyday life, and, in turn, how cultural, economic, and political forces shape these technologies. By interrogating the historical development of selected media from a variety of theoretical perspectives, we will examine how new cultural forms are made possible by various new technologies. These discussions will be embedded in an exploration of the social institutions that produce and distribute media texts and the different ways in which they are consumed.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Be familiar with recent and emerging theories of new media
2. Demonstrate knowledge of recent and emerging methods of new media analysis
3. Demonstrate further development of their written, spoken and visual communication literacies
4. Be able to demonstrate critical analytical skills in relation to new media theories and practices.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

This course is designed on the assumption that students will be able to commit an average of 13 hours a week, including lectures, tutorials, and academic reading, research and writing.

READINGS

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. You can order textbooks and student notes online at

www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to you or they can be picked up from the shop. You will be contacted when they are available.

Essential texts:

MDIA 206 Course Reader

Recommended Reading:

Lister, M, K Kelly, J Dovey, S Giddings and I Grant. *New Media: a Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2009 (available in closed reserve).

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Assessment item	Word length	%	Due date
1. Short Essay	1500 words	30%	Week 5 (Wed 31 March 2010)
2. Essay	2000 words	40%	Week 8 (Fri 7 May 2010)
3. Tutorial Paper	1000 words (+ tut participation)	30%	Sign-up in tutorial (between wk 9-11)

1. Short Essay (1500 words) 30% DUE WEEK 5 (Wed 31 March 2010, by 2 pm)

This assessment asks you to engage with materials in Part 1 of the course. You are to select a reading from Part 1 of the course and write a critical response to it. To do this you need to:

- Identify the main thesis of the reading (what the writer is arguing).
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of this argument.
- Define and demonstrate an understanding of the most salient key terms used by your chosen author.
- Use examples of new media texts or practices to demonstrate your understanding and to support your argument.

Write your critical response using the essay form. Include an introduction, a thesis statement (your own, not that of the selected author), topic sentences, presentation of argument & textual evidence and a conclusion. You should also include the correct bibliographic reference information for all sources used. To enhance the analytical dimension of your short essay we encourage you to cite the work of other authors in the field. This not only enriches your discussion, the work of other authors can be used to justify the claims you make about the reading you have selected.

*This assessment relates to objectives 1, 2 and 3.

2. Essay (2000 words) 40% Due Week 8 (Fri 7 May 2010, by 2 pm)

Essay questions will be posted on BLACKBOARD well in advance of the due date.

While your Tutorial Paper needs to be handed in to your tutor at the time of your tutorial, your short essay and long essay should be submitted to the department. Do not hand your short or long essay assignment in to a tutor or lecturer.

The criteria for assessing your short and long essay includes:

Argument

- Clear and succinct introduction
- Thesis precisely formulated
- Thesis well substantiated
- Logically developed argument (well-defined paragraphs)
- Paragraphs clearly focused and introduced by topic sentence
- Strong justification of argument
- Clear conclusion
- Analytical presentation
- Original and creative thought

Style and Presentation

- Legible and well set-out
- Fluently expressed
- Succinct and concise
- Correct grammar and syntax
- Correct spelling and punctuation

Criticism/methodology

- Appropriate use of lecture notes
- Accurate use of terminology
- Good use of quotations
- Good acknowledgement of sources
- Clear and precise footnoting or reference style
- Good bibliographical style

*This assessment relates to objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4.

3. Tutorial Paper (1000 words + tut participation) 30% Sign-up in tutorial (between wk 9-11)

This assessment asks you to engage with materials discussed between weeks 9–11 of the course. Once tutorials begin you will be asked to sign up to complete a Tutorial Paper on ONE of the three topics discussed between weeks 9–11 (see topic questions below). You must write a 1000 word essay that addresses your chosen topic. Bear in mind that your Tutorial Paper should have an analytical dimension and be structured in essay form (introduction, thesis statement, presentation of argument & textual evidence, conclusion).

An integral part of this assignment is sharing the findings of your Tutorial Paper with the rest of the class. It is therefore expected that in the week you submit your Tutorial paper you will a) attend your tutorial and b) contribute to the group discussion. Hand in your written version of the paper to your tutor at the end of the tutorial. Make sure to have an electronic backup of the Tutorial Paper you have submitted to your tutor.

The criteria for assessing your Tutorial Paper includes:

- Attendance at tutorial
- Contribution to group discussion
- Introduction/conclusion (in written version)
- Argumentation (in written version)
- Style and presentation (in written version)

Topic 1 (week 9):

In what ways are our day-to-day uses of the Internet, personal mobile technologies and other media subject to surveillance? Draw on the assigned readings for this topic to support your argument.

Topic 2 (week 10):

Sherry Turkle points out how the computer is a tool that offers us new models of mind and a new medium in which to project our ideas and fantasies. In what other ways have the computer and other new media technologies influenced us and our world?

Topic 3 (week 11):

Manuel Castells (1996) has argued that social life now takes place in the “space of flows”, in virtual terrains created by webs of electronic communication. Consider how you (can) move and act in these spaces of flow. How can you express yourself and participate in everyday life (private, public, political, professional, etc.) through media technologies? What is the role of technological knowledge?

If, due to extenuating circumstances, you cannot attend the tutorial you have signed up for, the course convenor will organise a make-up session to be held in week 12 in the second hour of the final lecture. This will involve a new topic question and will be available only to those students who can furnish a medical certificate or who can furnish proof of extenuating circumstances (and this does NOT apply to workload issues). The course convenor is the point of contact for discussing these issues.

*This assessment relates to objectives 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

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day or part work day, starting from the hour the work is due. This means late work will drop one 'grade-step' every second day—i.e. from C+ to C, or A- to B+. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

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. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students must submit ALL pieces of assessment in order to pass the course.

This course is 100% internally assessed and is designed on the understanding that you attend every lecture session and every tutorial. Tutorials are an essential means to complete the course successfully since you will get a chance to develop your understanding of the topic, ask questions, receive information about assignments and deliver a compulsory presentation (between weeks 9–11). Part of your assessment will be based on your preparation of tutorial material and contribution in class (see assessment item 3 below).

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course (i. e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer.

Please type your essays in 12pt with 1.5 or double spacing and leave a reasonable margin for comments from the person marking it. Proofread essays carefully so as 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 through the essay, and your provision of a full bibliography. For full details regarding approaches to essay writing and the development of bibliographies, in addition to the correct use of notes, references and citation, please refer to the prescribed Guidelines for SEFTMS students as well as the essay writing guide on Blackboard.

It is the responsibility of the student (rather than of the tutor) to ensure that coursework is completed and submitted/presented on time. Students should observe due dates for both the essay and tutorial papers.

We recognise that plagiarism often arises through misunderstandings and through not knowing how to reference material you have used properly. The Student Learning Centre runs workshops on how to avoid plagiarism. You should also read the material about Plagiarism below, and the material on the University's website. See your tutor if you have any doubts about the work that you submit.

Your essay should be placed in the MDIA essay box in 42-44 KP and not given directly to a tutor. You will be required to attach a cover sheet, which you need to sign, indicating that you are aware of the University's policy on plagiarism, and that the assignment is all your own work. Your assignment will not be marked until this cover sheet is signed. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what plagiarism is, and what the University's policy on plagiarism is. Please do not sign the cover sheet if you do not understand these.

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>

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_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1 2 Mar Introduction to Key Concepts and Themes - no tutorials

Week 2 9 Mar History and Technology - tutorials

Week 3 16 Mar Data and Networks - tutorials

Week 4 23 Mar Cultural Production and New Media - tutorials

Week 5 30 Mar Visual Culture and New Media - tutorials

ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE 31 March 2010 by 2 pm

Mid Trimester Break: Friday 2 April– Sunday 18 April 2010

Week 6 20 Apr Music and New Media - tutorials

Week 7 27 Apr Online Communities - tutorials

Week 8 4 May Participation and New Media - tutorials

ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE 7 MAY 2010 by 4 pm

Week 9 11 May Surveillance Cultures - tutorials

ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

Week 10 18 May Embodiment and Cyborg Cultures - tutorials

ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

Week 11 25 May New Media Literacies and Everyday Life - tutorials

ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE

Week 12 1 June Course Wrap-up
no tutorials

Study Week: Monday 7 June to Friday 11 June 2010

Examination Period: Friday 11 June – Sunday 4 July 2010