

MDIA 205 Popular Music Studies

Trimester 2 2010

Monday 12 July to Saturday 13 November 2010

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates:	Monday 12 July 2010 to Friday 15 October 2010
Mid-trimester break:	Monday 23 August to Sunday 5 September 2010
Study week:	Monday 18 October to Friday 22 October 2010
Last piece of assessment due:	Monday October 11 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

Course Convener

Associate Professor Roy Shuker

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Tutor

Michael Schraa

83 Fairlie Terrace, room 206

Office Hours TBA

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CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Tuesday 2.10 – 4.00pm. Room: Kirk LT 301 (near the over bridge)

Tutorials

TBA Further details can be found on the MDIA 205 Blackboard site, or on the noticeboards outside the Programme administration office 83 Fairlie Terrace, room 202.

COURSE DELIVERY

There are twelve (12) lectures & eleven (11) tutorials. See the schedule for details.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be posted on Blackboard. Only the main course guidelines and reading list are on, due to issues of copyright and intellectual property, the full lectures are not posted there.

COURSE CONTENT

What is 'popular music culture'? Why take it seriously?

What is the appeal of performers such as Kylie Minogue and Kurt Cobain?

Just what is 'the music industry'; how does it shape the production and consumption of music?

What role does 'the music press' play in the commodification of popular music?

What are emo, speed metal, and bhangra? Who listens to them, and why?

Why does New Zealand on Air use our taxes to support New Zealand music?

What is the impact of digital music and cyberspace on the music industry?

If you are interested in critically examining such questions, this course is for you.

No formal knowledge of music is required.

The course presupposes an active student engagement with popular music, and the discourses surrounding its production and consumption, in a manner that is both academically rigorous and pleasurable.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- The course provides a critical introduction to the study of popular music culture, with an emphasis on post-1950s rock and pop music and subsequent genres.
- Students will be introduced to issues and views/theories that relate to popular music culture and the various forms it takes.
- Students will gain an understanding of the nature and interaction of the international and New Zealand music industry; music scenes, stars and authorship; audiences and fans; textual and genre analysis; and music as a form of cultural politics.
- Through the course assignments and tutorial tasks, students will be expected to put into use critical terms, concepts, and approaches that they are presented with in the course.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

This course is worth 20 points. The expectation is that this equates to an average of fifteen hours work per week, over a twelve-week trimester. This includes lectures, tutorials, course reading, and assignments,

Obviously, individual effort will vary, depending when you have pieces of work due. Tutorials begin in Week Two of the trimester. You should attend at least 75% of your tutorial sessions. A roll will be kept, and you will present a specific tutorial task as an integral part of the course. Each of you will make a brief (10 minutes) tutorial presentation on a provided topic (these will be randomly allocated at the first tutorials). The presentation and following discussion will be useful material for writing the tutorial paper (1,000 words). This must be handed to the tutor no later than one week after the presentation. The presentation is not assessed; only the paper version will be graded.

READINGS

Essential texts:

Roy Shuker (2008) *Understanding Popular Music Culture*, Routledge, London & New York.

This will be a starting point and background reading for the lectures, which will largely focus on clarifying central debates and providing illustrative case studies.

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.

Customers 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 customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Recommended Reading:

These are held on CLOSED RESERVE or REFERENCE in the Library. See the separate handout.

Some key articles can be accessed electronically. There also some very useful, relevant web sites, though at times these need to be treated with caution (as, indeed, do all sources). Available resources shall be fully discussed at the first class, and in the first tutorial sessions.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Internal: 100%

To complete the course requirements, students must submit two assignments, the tutorial task, and attend at least 75% of the tutorial sessions. The value of the written work is:

- (1) Tutorial presentation (individual topics provided at first tutorial) 20%
- (2) Essay 1,200-1,500 words 40%
- (3) Essay 1,200-1,500 words 40%

Tutorials

These begin in Week Two of the trimester. You should attend at least 75% of your tutorial sessions.

A roll will be kept, and you will present a specific tutorial task as an integral part of the course.

Tutorial presentation. Each of you will make a brief (10 minutes) presentation on a provided topic (these will be randomly allocated at the first tutorials). The presentation and following discussion will be useful material for writing the tutorial paper (1,000 words). This must be handed to the tutor no later than one week after the presentation. The presentation is not assessed; only the paper version will be graded.

ASSIGNMENTS

Write on any TWO of the following:

(NOTE: if you do more than two, the 'best two' count towards your course assessment).

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 1: The New Zealand Music Industry DUE: Monday 9 August

"The contemporary New Zealand music industry remains marginalized and underdeveloped within both local and international markets".

With reference to illustrative examples, critically discuss this claim.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 2: Popular music and the Internet DUE: Monday 16 August

With reference to illustrative examples, critically discuss the impact of social networking sites (My Space etc) on the production, distribution and consumption of popular music.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 3: Music Press DUE: Monday 13 September

EITHER:

"Women and their interests are marginalized by the popular music press". With reference to female writers and female consumers, critically discuss this assertion.

(Your discussion will need to refer to specific examples from contemporary music publications).

OR:

Write a critical review of ONE popular music biography (or autobiography) from the list provided (see separate handout).

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 4: Genre DUE: Monday 27 September

“Popular music genres constitute an undifferentiated monolithic whole’.

With reference to ONE of the following genres, critically discuss this assertion.

Punk rock – Reggae - Alt.country

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 5: Politics DUE: Monday 11 October

“Youth subcultures have no political significance”.

Critically discuss this claim, with reference to specific examples.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

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. Work submitted after the deadline without an extension will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To complete the course requirements, students must submit two assignments, the tutorial task, and attend at least 75% of the tutorial sessions.

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. Work submitted in the final examination will obviously be handwritten. You are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

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 13 July **INTRODUCTION: STUDYING POPULAR MUSIC CULTURE:**

The Archies versus The MC5

Course Administration:

Course outline, Assessment, Reference List, Organization of tutorials.

COURSE READING: Textbook - Introduction.

Week 2 20 July **THE INTERNATIONAL MUSIC INDUSTRY**

An Overview: The Local in the Global.

Marketing- The Rolling Stones, 1966 – 2010

The branding of Bob Marley and the Wailers (in textbook)

Background reading: Textbook chapter 1.

Related Web sites:

The Recording Industry Association of America: www.riaa.com

The British Phonographic Industry: www.bpi.co.uk

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industries:
www.ifpi.org

Who Owns What: www.cjr.org/resources/

FIRST TUTORIAL SESSIONS: Wednesday July 21st.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO ATTEND YOUR FIRST TUTORIAL.

(Note that the tutorial tasks will be allocated at these sessions).

Week 3 27 July **THE NEW ZEALAND MUSIC INDUSTRY**

Guest speaker:

Cath Andersen, General Manager, New Zealand Music Industry Commission.

Background reading: Textbook chapter 3. Reading List.

Week 4 3 August **NEW ZEALAND MUSIC & NZOA**

Guest speaker : Brendan Smyth, NZ Music Manager, New Zealand On Air.

Background reading: Textbook chapter 12.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 1: THE NEW ZEALAND MUSIC INDUSTRY.

Due Monday 9 August

See the Reading List for resources, including web sites.

Week 5 10 August **TECHNOLOGY**

Introduction: a short history of sound recording.

Screening: The Invention of Recorded Sound (part of).

Further reading: Course text: chapter 2.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 2: MUSIC AND THE INTERNET.

Due Monday 16 August.

Week 6 17 August **ISSUES OF AUTHORSHIP AND STARDOM**

Overview; Case studies: Trevor Horn; SAW; Kylie Minogue

Further reading: Course text: chapters 3 and 4.

Mid Trimester Break: Monday 23 August to Sunday 5 September 2010

Week 7 7 Sept **THE MUSIC PRESS & MUSIC JOURNALISM**

Introduction

Guest Lecture: Simon Sweetman

Further reading: Course text chapter 9.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 3: MUSIC PRESS. Due Monday 12 September.

Week 8 14 Sept **GENRE: INTRODUCTION**

Background reading: Course text: chapter 6

Week 9 21 Sept **GENRE CASE STUDY: INDIE**

Guest Lecturer: Brannavan Gnanalingham

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 4: GENRE. Due Monday 27 September.

Week 10 28 Sept **THE POLITICS OF RAP & HIP HOP**

Guest Lecture: April Henderson

Week 11 5 Oct **ISSUES IN POLITICS & POPULAR MUSIC**

Includes guidelines to essay topic 5.

Course Review

Week 12 12 Oct **CONSUMPTION: RECORD COLLECTING**

CLASS QUIZ (WITH PRIZES!)

Further Reading: Course text; chapter 13.

ASSIGNMENT OPTION 5: POLITICS. Due Monday 11 October.