

MDIA 301 Media Theory and Cultural Production

Trimester 2 2012

16 July to 17 November 2012

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 16 July to 19 October 2012

Mid-trimester break: 27 August to 9 September 2012

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

Lauren Anderson lauren.anderson@vuw.ac.nz 04 463 6824 83FT Room 311

Office Hour: Weds 10-11am

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Tuesdays 3.10pm to 5.00pm HMLT002

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 301 site on Blackboard: go to "Tutorials" and then follow the instructions under the "SCubed - Tutorial Enrolment Instructions" link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the bulletin board outside the SEFTMS Reception, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

TEACHING LEARNING SUMMARY

1 x 2 hour lecture per week

1 x 50 minute tutorial per week (tutorials will take place in weeks 2-12)

See the section on Mandatory Course Requirements for details on attendance policies

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All additional information will be announced in lectures and tutorials, and made available on the MDIA 301 Blackboard site.

Occasionally, emails will be sent to the MDIA 301 class via Blackboard. Blackboard only recognises VUW email addresses. If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, please set a forward from the Victoria email system to the address you do use. If you do not do this, you may miss out on important information.

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the relationship between critical social theory and the impact of the media on the production of culture.

COURSE CONTENT

This course will function as an overview of important media-related theories and approaches to analysis. We will consider key bodies of theoretical work, and investigate how the different approaches seek to explain media institutions, texts and audiences.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. Summarise scholarly texts
2. Explain, compare and contrast the key tenets of a range of media-related theories and approaches to analysis
3. Use the concepts and tools of key media-related theories and approaches in the analysis of media-related phenomena
4. Critique the relative strengths and weaknesses of a media-related theory/approach.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20 point course is 200 hours spread evenly over the 12 week trimester and breaks, or 13 hours per teaching week.

READINGS

Essential texts:

Please access reading materials for this course via Blackboard. All readings are to be done BEFORE lecture.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Assignment 1 (20%)	Reading summaries, 800-1000 words	Due Monday 13 Aug, 12 noon
Assignment 2 (30%)	Comparison of two theories, 1000-1200 words	Due Monday 17 Sept, 12 noon
Assignment 3 (50%)	Application of chosen theory, 3000 words	Due Friday 19 Oct, 12 noon

All assignments must be submitted via Turnitin **and** in hard copy to the MDIA Drop Slot (SEFTMS Admin Office, 83 Fairlie Terrace) by the date/time listed above. Submit an electronic copy of **all** assignments to Turnitin before handing in your hard copy to the Drop Slot. **You must attach a Turnitin receipt to the hard copy.** Assignments will not be marked until both copies have been received.

References should follow the format of one accepted style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.). The SEFTMS Student Handbook (available via Blackboard) gives guidelines for MLA formatting. You may use another style, as long as you format correctly.

Assignment 1: Summary/evaluation of readings

Due: Monday 13 August at 12 noon (Week 5)

Word limit (total): 800-1000 words

This assessment relates to Learning Objective 1.

Choose **two** items from the course readings from Weeks 2-5.

Provide a 400-500 word summary of each article. Your summary should:

1. identify the article's key argument;
2. outline (briefly) how the author/s make that argument (i.e. what evidence do they offer?); and
3. evaluate the argument (i.e. how convincing is it? What might they have left out? What evidence do you know of that contradicts their argument?)

Marking Criteria:

- Clarity and conciseness of expression
- Clarity and completeness of overview of article's argument and evidence
- Evaluation of article (note: "evaluating" a piece of writing does not mean stating whether or not you "agree" with it. Measure the article's strengths and weaknesses)

Assignment 2: Comparison of two theories

Due: Monday 17 September at 12 noon (Week 8)

Word limit: 1000-1200 words

This assessment relates to Learning Objective 2.

Compare and contrast **two** theories, discussing how they conceive of media institutions, media texts and media audiences:

1. Choose two theories covered in this course

2. Compare and contrast the key tenets of the two theories, paying particular attention to how they conceive of/construct media institutions, texts, and audiences (i.e. on what assumptions about institutions, texts, and audiences does the theory rely in order to 'work'?)

Marking Criteria:

- Clarity of overview of chosen theories/approaches
- Clarity of points of comparison/contrast in relation to institutions, texts, and audiences.
- Evidence of independent research from reputable academic sources (no more than 20% of your bibliography should be internet-based) and ability to synthesise material from these sources.
- Clarity of structure, and scholarly argumentation (introduction, including thesis statement; body; conclusion). See the SEFTMS student handbook for extensive and useful advice on argument and essay construction.
- Quality and fluency of expression (including correct grammar, punctuation, etc.)
- Accuracy of referencing

Assignment 3: Application of chosen theory to a media-related "text"

Due: Friday 19 October at 12 noon (Week 12)

Word limit: 3000 words

This assessment relates to Learning Objectives 4 and 5.

Apply **one** theory or approach discussed in the course to a media text/figure/process/event. Evaluate that theory's strengths and weaknesses for analysing your chosen object.

1. Choose a site of analysis from the popular media (e.g. a television programme, a celebrity, a film, a popular musician/band, a political movement that relies on social networking, election coverage, etc). If you are unsure about your choice, please check with your tutor.
2. Critically discuss the way in which your chosen 'text' can be understood from the perspective of one of the theories/approaches/debates covered in this course (if you would like to focus on a theory that is not covered in the course, please see your tutor).
3. Critically evaluate the usefulness of your chosen theory for understanding your chosen 'text'.
4. You should primarily draw on only one theory, though you may refer to others where necessary/appropriate (e.g. in your evaluation of your chosen theory)

Marking Criteria:

- Clarity of overview of chosen theory/approach and chosen site of analysis.
- Clarity of evaluation of strengths/weaknesses of chosen theory/approach.
- Evidence of independent research from reputable academic sources (no more than 20% of your bibliography should be internet-based) and ability to synthesise material from these sources.
- Clarity of structure, and scholarly argumentation (introduction, including thesis statement; body; conclusion). See the SEFTMS student handbook for extensive and useful advice on argument and essay construction.
- Quality and fluency of expression (including correct grammar, punctuation, etc.)
- Accuracy of referencing

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office, 83 Fairlie Terrace. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

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. Tutors cannot grant extensions.

Work submitted after the deadline (without a pre-arranged 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 gain a pass in this course you must:

- Submit all pieces of assessment (hard copy to the MDIA Drop Slot and electronic copy to Turnitin)
- Attend **at least** 7 lectures
- Attend **at least** 8 tutorials

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. Where handwritten work is required you are expected to write clearly. If this 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>

TURNITIN

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Work will not be marked until evidence of Turnitin submission is provided.

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.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study.

Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic.

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
MEDIA STUDIES PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE MDIA 301

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week	Lecture date	Topic	Assessments
Week 1	16 July	Introduction: What is theory?	
Week 2	23 July	Culture, Ideology & Hegemony	
Week 3	30 July	Social life and Cultural Studies, pt. I	
Week 4	6 August	Social life and Cultural Studies, pt. II	
Week 5	13 August	Political Economy, pt. I	Assignment 1: Monday 12pm
Week 6	20 August	Political Economy, pt. II	
<i>Mid Trimester Break: Monday 27 August to Sunday 9 September 2012</i>			
Week 7	10 September	Issues of Representation, pt. I	
Week 8	17 September	Issues of Representation, pt. II	Assignment 2: Monday 12pm
Week 9	24 September	The Postmodern Turn & New Media, pt I	
Week 10	1 October	The Postmodern Turn & New Media, pt. II	
Week 11	8 October	Globalisation & Social Movements	
Week 12	15 October	Social Movements & Vernacular Theories	Assignment 3: Friday 19 Oct, 12pm