

# MDIA 312 Media, Polity & Economy

## Trimester 1

5 March to 4 July 2012

20 Points



### TRIMESTER DATES

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Teaching dates:               | 5 March to 8 June 2012 |
| Mid-trimester break:          | 6 to 22 April 2012     |
| Study week:                   | 11 to 15 June 2012     |
| Last piece of assessment due: | 18 June 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

### Course Coordinator and Lecturer

Peter Thompson, Room 305, 83 Fairlie Terrace. Phone 04 463 6827. Email [peter.thompson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:peter.thompson@vuw.ac.nz)

Office Hours: Wednesday, 10.30am-12.00pm or by appointment

### Tutor

Natalia Ferrer Roca, Room 301, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

Email [natalia.ferrerroca@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:natalia.ferrerroca@vuw.ac.nz)

Office Hours: TBC

Contributing Lecturer: TBC

## CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

**Lectures: Tuesdays, 10.00- 11.50am, Hugh McKenzie Lecture Theatre 104**

**Tutorials: TBC**

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 312 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 Admin Office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

## COURSE DELIVERY

There will be 12 two hour lectures and 10 one hour tutorials

Tutorials are essential to completing the course successfully as they are an opportunity to develop your understanding, ask questions, and receive information about assignments. All students are expected to read the relevant article from the course reader and at least one other suggested reading prior to attending each tutorial, and undertake other reasonable preparations for effective participation. Consistent lecture and tutorial attendance is required. Note that students who miss more than two tutorials without providing adequate justification to their tutors will fail to meet mandatory course requirements.

## COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All course related information, and any additional information that students may find useful, will be available on the MDIA312 Blackboard site. Lecture powerpoints will be uploaded to Blackboard, usually after the lecture. These are an outline only and must NOT be considered an adequate substitute for lecture attendance. Blackboard also includes areas for class discussion, and you are encouraged to utilise this. NB: If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

## COURSE PRESCRIPTION

The course examines the relations between media, politics and economics from a dual perspective: The influence of political and economic arrangements on media operations is considered alongside the role of media in the functioning of government and markets. In exploring these themes, the course highlights different perspectives within the political-economy paradigm, particularly liberal-pluralism, neo-Marxism, and the institutionalist approach.

## COURSE CONTENT

The course examines the relations between the media, politics and economics from a dual perspective: The influence of political and economic arrangements on the way different media operate is considered alongside the role of media in the functioning of government and markets. This encompasses a range of issues including; institutional arrangements and practices of contemporary media; the media's role in facilitating or eroding democratic process/participation; media representations of politics and economics; the extent to which the media serve an elite propaganda function or influence government policy; the tensions between commercial and public service media functions; the implications of digital platforms for media economics; the role of the media in the development of the informational economy and financial markets; the global media and imperialism debates. In exploring these themes, the course highlights the different perspectives within political-economy, particularly liberal-pluralism, neo-Marxism, and the Institutional approach.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students who complete the course should be able to:

1. Identify the assumptions underpinning different political-economic paradigms and recognise their presence in academic literature and media discourses.
2. Demonstrate critical awareness of how evolving political and economic conditions shape the operations of media institutions.
3. Demonstrate critical awareness of how developments in media systems influence the functioning of the polity and economy.
4. Analyse contemporary political and economic issues related to the media in New Zealand or other countries using relevant theories and concepts.
5. Critically analyse an media institution using political-economic theory and evidence derived from documentary/archival methods.

## 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. This includes attendance at lectures and tutorials, reading and preparation for tutorials, and preparation for and completion of assignments.

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|--|----------|
| 1. Class attendance (12 sessions):                               | 24 hours |
| 2. Tutorial attendance (10 tutorials):                           | 10 hours |
| 3. Tutorial preparation  | 22 hours |
| 4. Reading (assigned and recommended readings):                  | 55 hours |
| 5. Article Review/Critique (assignment 1):                       | 22 hours |
| 6. Theoretical Discussion paper (assignment 2):                  | 22 hours |
| 7. Research essay including research and writing (assignment 3): | 45 hours |

## READINGS

### Essential Text:

MDIA 312 Student Notes.

Note that undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 13 February to 16 March 2012, 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 of the trimester all

undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building. You can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto: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.

Other resources will be posted on Blackboard. See lecture schedule for weekly recommended reading.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Winseck, D. & Jin, D-Y. (Eds.) (2011). The political economies of media. London: Bloomsbury.
- Wasko, J, . Murdock, G. & Sousa, H. (Eds.) (2011). The handbook of political economy of communications. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Fitzgerald, S.W. (2012). Corporations and Cultural Industries- Time Warner, Bertelsmann and News Corporation. Lanham, MY: Lexington Books.
- Davis, A. (2010) Political communication and social theory. London: Routledge.
- Murdock, G. & Golding, P. (2010). (Eds.) Digital dynamics- engagements and disconnections. Creskill NJ: Hampton press.
- Mosco, V. (2009) The political economy of media (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). London: Sage.
- McChesney, R. (2008). The political economy of media- enduring issues, emerging dilemmas. NY: Monthly Review Press.
- Thusu, D.K. (2006). International Communication- continuity and change (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). London Hodder/Arnold.
- Calabrese, A. & Sparks, C. (2004) (Eds.) Toward a Political Economy of Culture: capitalism and Communication in the twenty-first century. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Golding, P. & Murdock, G. (Eds.) (1997) The Political Economy of the Media, Vols. 1 -2. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

**ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- Short Essay A (Political Economy of Media) 800-1000 words: 20% (Learning Objectives 1,2)  
Due Date: **9.30am, Tuesday, 3 April 2012**
- Short Essay B (Media in Polity & Economy) 800-1000 words: 20% (Learning Objectives 1,3)  
Due Date: **9.30am, Tuesday, 8 May 2012**
- Researched Essay on selected Media Institution. 3000 words: 60% (Learning Objectives 1-5)  
Due Date: **1.00pm, Monday, 18 June 2012**

**INTERNAL ASSESSMENT (100%)**

1. **Short essay A: 800-1000 words (20%)** This relates to Learning Objectives 1 & 2. Select **two** political-economic perspectives (from liberal-pluralist, Marxist, Frankfurt School, or Institutional). Write a short essay summarising their characteristic features and identify the key points of difference between them. Then illustrate these features and points of difference by applying the theories to explain an example of media production and/or content form (for example, the prevalence of populist content in prime time television, the ubiquity of advertising, or the exclusive acquisition of rights to sports events by subscription operators).

- 2. Short essay B: 800-1000 words (20%)** This relates to Learning Objectives 1 & 3. EITHER: Choose *one* political-economic perspective on the media and use it to analyse the significance of the media for *two* political or economic phenomena/ institutional arrangements. OR: Analyse the significance of the media in *one* political or economic phenomenon/institutional arrangement using *two* political-economic perspectives on the media and highlighting the differences between them. (For example, parliamentary practices or democratic representation/elections, or the conduct of international relations. Or, the globalisation of the economy, international business competition, the increasing significance of informational goods/intellectual property, or the credit crunch/financial crises).
- 3. Researched Essay on selected Media Institution 3000 words (60%).** This relates to Learning Objectives 4 & 5. Using the documentary/archival research method and secondary sources, analyse the political and economic arrangements underpinning the operation of a media (or media-related) institution of your choice. This should identify ownership, regulatory arrangements, funding/revenue streams, and norms of practice on an institutional level, and consider how these inflect the institution's functions/practices (e.g. are some forms of content avoided because of increasing market cost?). The essay should also consider how broader political, economic and ideological factors shape the institution's operations in the context of the wider media ecology (e.g. is a publicly funded broadcaster finding the government resistant to increasing its subsidy, or is intensified market competition from online media forcing a newspaper cut staffing?). Finally, the essay should make some observations about any wider political-economic implications of the findings for the role of media in society.
- Note:** More specific details for each piece of assessment will be available on Blackboard.

### ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

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

Assignments should be submitted in hard copy through the MDIA drop slot by the main entrance of 83 Fairlie Terrace. You should retain both a hard and an electronic copy for your own records.

### 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 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 a hard copy of Assignment 1 to the MDIA drop slot.
- Submit a hard copy of Assignment 2 to the MDIA drop slot.
- Submit a hard copy of Assignment 3 to the MDIA drop slot.
- Attend a minimum of 8 tutorials AND 8 lectures.

### **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>

- Referencing is required for all assignments which refer to or makes use of other authors' work, whether direct quotes or indirect use of ideas/data. A standard style of referencing (e.g. MLA, Harvard, APA) should be used in text and in the reference list. If in doubt, reference!

### **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.

### WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress). Most statutes and policies are available at [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://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](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic).

## LECTURE SCHEDULE & READINGS

### **Introduction: Media, Polity & Economy Overview**

Week 1

• Wasko, J. (2008). The political economy of communications. In A. Hansen (Ed.) Mass communication research methods Vol.2. London: Sage. pp. 4-25.

6 March

• Babe, R. (1995). On political economy. In R. Babe. Communication and the transformation of economics- essays in information, public policy and political economy. Boulder, Col: Westview Press. pp. 69-85.

• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.

### **Liberal Pluralism: Media markets, public goods, value chains**

Week 2

• Meehan, E., & Torre, P.J. (2011). Markets in theory and markets in television. In J. Wasko, G. Murdock & H. Sousa (Eds.) The handbook of political economy of communications. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell. pp. 62-81.

13

March

• Wildman, S.S. (2006). Paradigms and analytical frameworks in modern economics and media economics. In A.B. Albaran, S.M. Chan-Olmsted & M.O. Wirth (Eds.) Handbook of Media Management and Economics. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. pp. 66-90.

• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.

### **Marxism: Ownership, accumulation & imperialism**

Week 3

• Berger, A.A. (1995). Marxism and cultural criticism. In A.A. Berger. Cultural criticism- a primer of key concepts. London: Sage. pp. 41-70.

20

March

• Murdock, G. & Golding, P. (2005). Culture, communications and political economy. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.) Mass Media and Society (4th ed). London: Hodder Arnold.

• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.

### **Frankfurt School: Commodification, colonisation, public sphere**

Week 4

• Scannell, P. (2007). Mass culture- Horkheimer, Adorno, Brecht, Benjamin, Germany/USA, 1930s and 1940s. In P. Scannell. Media and Communication. London: Sage. pp. 30-62.

27

March

• Berger, A.A. (1995). Marxism and cultural criticism. In A.A. Berger. Cultural criticism- a primer of key concepts. London: Sage. pp. 41-70.

• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.



### **Institutionalist perspective: Media policy and media politics (\*guest seminar)**

Week 5

3 April

- Thompson, P.A. (forthcoming). Last chance to see? Public broadcasting policy and the public sphere in New Zealand. In M. Hirst, S. Phelan & V. Rupa (Eds.) Journalism, politics and power in New Zealand. Auckland: AUT/JMAD.
- Flew, T. (2007). Theories of global media. In T. Flew. Understanding Global Media. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. pp.30-64.
- Thompson, P.A. (2011). Neoliberalism and the political economies of public television in New Zealand. Australian Journal of Communication (themed issue on the political economy of communication) 38(3). (in press).

## **Mid trimester break**

### **Media, Politics and Democracy**

Week 6

24 April

- Louw, E. (2005). Politics: image versus substance. In E. Louw. The media and political process. London: Sage. pp. 13-35.
- Davis, A. (2010). The production of policy and news- liquid politics and the working cultures of the new capitalism. In A. Davis. Political communication and social theory. London: Routledge. pp.51-66
- Boyd-Barrett, O. (2004). Judith Miller, The New York Times, and the propaganda model. Journalism Studies 5(4): 435-449.

### **Media, Markets and Globalisation**

Week 7

1 May

- Flew, T. (2005). Political economy, new media and the network society. In T. Flew. New media-an introduction. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. pp.40-60.
- Thompson, P.A. (2009). Market Manipulation? Applying the propaganda model to financial media reporting. Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture 6(2):73-96.
- Hope, W. (2010). Time, Communication and financial collapse. International Journal of Communication 4: 649-669.

### **Analysing Media Institutions: Documentary/Archival Methods**

Week 8

8 May

- Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (2008). Dealing with documentation. In A. Hansen (Ed.) Mass communication research methods Vol.4. London: Sage. pp.281-311.

### **Political economy of media in New Zealand/Aotearoa**

Week 9

15 May

- Thompson, P.A. (2011). Running on empty? The uncertain financial futures of public service media in the contemporary media policy environment. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 223-240.
- Smith, J. & Abel, S. (2008). Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: indigenous television in Aotearoa/New Zealand. NZ Journal

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of Media Studies, 11(1).

- Thompson, P.A. (2011). Neoliberalism and the political economies of public television in New Zealand. Australian Journal of Communication (themed issue on the political economy of communication) 38(3). (in press).

**Week 10 Political economy of international media**

22 May

- Thussu, D.K. (2006). Approaches to theorising international communication. In D.K. Thussu. International communication- continuity and change (2nd ed). London: Hodder ASrnold. Pp. 40-63.
- Hope, W. (2011). Global capitalism, temporality and the political economy of communication. In J. Wasko, G. Murdock & H. Sousa (Eds.) The handbook of political economy of communications. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell. pp.523-540.
- Winseck, D. (2002). The WTO, emerging policy regimes and the political economy of transnational communications. In M. Raboy (Ed.) Global media policy in the new millennium. Luton: University of Luton Press. pp. 19-37.

**Week 11 Political economy case studies -tbc**

29 May

**Week 12 Political economy case studies- tbc**

5 June

**Study Week: Monday 11 June to Friday 15 June 2012**

**Examination Period: Friday 15 June to Wednesday 4 July 2012**