

MDIA 207 News Analysis

Trimester 1 2013

4 March to 3 July 2013

20 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates:	4 March to 7 June 2013
Easter break:	28 March to 3 April 2013
Mid-trimester break:	22 to 28 April 2013
Last piece of assessment due:	19 June 2013

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

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

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff	Email	Phone	Room	Office Hours
Dr. Douglas A. Van Belle	doug.vanbelle@vuw.ac.nz	04 463 7447	FT83-307	Thursdays 1-3pm

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Wednesday 12-2pm HULT323

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 207 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 Administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

TEACHING LEARNING SUMMARY

Attendance to both lectures and tutorials is strongly advised. Lectures and tutorials build upon and extend the information in the required readings; they do not repeat the material from the readings. Therefore students are expected to independently read and study required readings in preparation for lectures, tutorials and tests.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Blackboard will be used as a bulletin board to post announcements and material relevant to the course, including a copy of this course outline and copies of details for the take home test and essay. It will also be used to electronically submit the essay at the end of Trimester

Lecture notes **WILL NOT** be posted on Blackboard.

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

This course provides students the opportunity to develop the theoretical background and skills necessary for critically analysing the various information products generated by the increasingly global news media. Rejecting the naive assumption that the news is an accurate and objective reflection of reality, the ways in which the news presents a distorted but consistent view of the world are systematically examined, with an emphasis on how and why these distortions exist and persist. In recognition of the wide variety of careers and intellectual pursuits that will find value in the skills enabling the critical engagement of the news media, this course is designed for a diverse student audience.

COURSE CONTENT

Lectures, readings and tutorials will all explore the complex inter-relationship between the news media, the public sphere as an arena of political competition, and news media audiences as the public part of that public sphere.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By focusing on the dynamics involved, it is expected that students will develop an understanding of the news media that will allow them to successfully interact with either the input of information into the news process or the knowledgeable utilisation of the resulting news product. Specifically students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Identify and analyse systemic influences that intervene between the source event and the delivered news product
- 2) Identify and analyse procedural influences that intervene between the source event and the delivered news product
- 3) Identify and analyse economic and business influences that intervene between the source event and the delivered news product
- 4) Identify and analyse political and social influences that intervene between the source event and the delivered news product
- 5) Demonstrate a comprehension and ability to apply theories to the analysis of news content.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20 point course is 200 hours over the trimester or 13 week hours per teaching week.

READINGS

Essential texts:

Jackie Harrison *News*. Routledge.

Michael Shudson, *Sociology of News*. Norton.

MDIA 207 ancillary readings: **All ancillary readings are required** and all are available free of charge to students, online through the VUW library under Course Reserves.

Students are also required read the *Dominion Post*, daily, throughout the trimester. In addition, students will be expected to read independently as needed for the completion of assignments and this may require the payment of interlibrary loan fees and/or the purchase of additional reading materials.

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre Foyer from 11 February to 15 March 2013, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from vicbooks' new store, Ground Floor Easterfield Building, Kelburn Parade. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from vicbooks, Easterfield 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 customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. You will be contacted when they are available.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

This course is internally assessed. Below is an outline of the points of student assessment. These criteria are final for Trimester 1, 2013 and supersede all other descriptions or depictions. All four assessments are required and must be completed to pass this course. Please note the definition of completion for the tutorial assignments in its description.

Short Test 1 (1 hour)	20%
Short Test 2 (1 hour)	20%
Short Test 3 (1 hour)	20%
Essay (3000 Words)	40%
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Total	100%

Note: The essay will be submitted electronically through Blackboard.

Short Tests

The short tests examine the student's ability to meet Learning Objectives 1-4. They focus heavily upon demonstrating an understanding of the content of the required readings and how that content relates to the lectures. Therefore students should tackle the readings as early in the Trimester as they can manage and should consider the lectures in Trimesters of how they contrast and compliment the information in the required readings. These tests will be held during the noted tutorials and will consist of a single essay question. All students attending the preceding week's tutorials will be given preparation and study

materials. Alternate testing accommodations will be made as required for students with disabilities, but official university documentation must be offered to both the tutor and coordinating instructor at the beginning of the Trimester. Make-up tests will only be offered to students with documented emergencies and please do note that the university is very strict about what counts as an emergency. **TRAVEL PLANS AND WORK COMMITMENTS ARE NOT AN ACCEPTABLE JUSTIFICATION FOR RESCHEDULING TESTING.** Students with multiple assessments clustering in a test week can inquire about taking this assessment up to one week early if that helps with scheduling. Students are strongly advised to utilise the Van Belle and Van Belle essay guide as part of the preparation for these essay tests as the clarity of argument offered will be a significant marking criteria. The guide is provided online:

http://www.cqpress.com/docs/college/VanBelle_WritingAppendix.pdf

It is also posted on Blackboard.

Short Test 1 Held in Tutorial Week 4

Short Test 2 Held in Tutorial Week 8

Short Test 3 Held in Tutorial Week 12

Essay, Analysis of News Content, (3,000 words), Due Wednesday 19 June

This essay will be submitted electronically via Blackboard. Late essays will be accepted. However, without a documented excuse that meets the university requirements for granting an extension, late essays will suffer a penalty of 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

This essay is intended to evaluate Learning Objective 5.

Students are also expected to use a standard style guide for formatting references and footnotes. The formatting and referencing instructions in the Media Studies Essay Guide (posted on Blackboard) may be used, but students majoring in other disciplines or familiar with other formats may use a standard alternative specific to the discipline. Markers prefer a Times Roman or similar serif font.

ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS

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

COLLECTING MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in tutorials or during their office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the Administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the Administration office.

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:

- Take all short tests
- Complete Essay
- Attend at least 7 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. You can find out more information on Class Representatives on www.vuwsa.org.nz.

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>

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.

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 (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.

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	6 March	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour Rationality and a political economy framework for conceptualising the news industry, its actions and its products. Agreement reality, news as a representation, not a reflection of reality, thinking in Trimesters of the construction of news as the construction of a public sphere or mediated reality. The stained-glass window as a metaphor for the metaphor of the news as a window on the world.</p> <p>Second Hour Human cognition, news and the rationale behind the essay guide to be applied to all written assessment for this course.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: No Tutorials</p> <p>Readings For Week 2: Harrison Chapters 1, 2 and 4:</p>
Week 2	13 March	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour The Business of News — The Audience as Product, Costs versus the value of the product.</p> <p>Second Hour The Business of the News — Advertising, delivery costs, market sizes and niche versus mass audience strategies.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: Discussion of target audiences, advertisers and how that might influence coverage choices.</p> <p>Readings For Week 3: Harrison Chapter 3: Schudson Chapters 6, 9 and 10</p>
Week 3	20 March	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour Imperatives of and limitations on the news — Newsworthiness.</p> <p>Second Hour Imperatives of and limitations on the news -- The dramatic story structure.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: The William Shatner School of Acting Dynamics, Discuss. Study guide for Short Test 1</p> <p>Readings For Week 4: Harrison Chapter 5: Schudson Chapter 7 (included in Short Test 1)</p>
Week 4 MTW	27 March	<p>Lecture Topics: (Not Included in Short Test 1)</p> <p>First Hour Imperatives and limitations on the news -- Gatekeeping and logistics Theory.</p> <p>Second Hour Imperatives and limitations on the news -- Gatekeeping and logistics The Sudan Somalia Example.</p>
Easter Break:	Thursday 28 March to Wednesday 3 April 2013	
Week 4 R F	Date	<p>Tutorial Activity: Short Test 1</p> <p>Readings For Week 5: Harrison Chapter 7: Schudson Chapters 8 and 11. Livingston, Steven and D. Van Belle (2004) "The Effects of New Satellite</p>

Newsgathering Technology on Newsgathering from Remote Locations.”

Political Communication 22 : 45-62 Available online through the library.

Week 5	10 April	Lecture Topics: First Hour Mutual exploitation model of the news. Second Hour Three social/political communicative roles of the news -- Top down, lateral, bottom up. Tutorial Activity: Discuss Livingston and Van Belle Reading. Readings For Week 6: A Strategic Guide to Writing for the Classroom. http://www.cqpress.com/docs/college/VanBelle_WritingAppendix.pdf
Week 6	17 April	First Hour Sex and the news. Second Hour What your parents never told you about essays. Tutorial Activity: Essay assignment discussed. The use of library database access to research articles discussed. Tutorial Assignment for Week 7: Students should select an Essay topic and write a one paragraph description of it to present for discussion. Readings For Week 7: Harrison Chapter 6: Schudson Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Bennett, W. Lance (1990) Toward a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States. <i>Journal of Communication</i> 40, Vol 2. Spring, 103-125.
Mid Trimester Break: Monday 22 to Sunday 28 April 2013		
Week 7	1 May	Lecture Topics: First Hour Elite dominance of the sources of news—Framing and Agenda setting Second Hour Elite dominance of the sources of news--Indexing Tutorial Activity: Discuss Bennett Reading. Study guide for short test 2. Readings For Week 8: Harrison Chapter 8
Week 8	8 May	Lecture Topics: First Hour Elite dominance of the sources of news -- Strategies, taking advantage of the business imperatives of the news. Second Hour Elite dominance of the sources of news -- Psuedo events, controlled news environments, spin, back to framing. Tutorial Activity: Short Test 2. Readings For Week 8: Schudson Chapter 4 McLeod, Douglas M and Benjamin H Detenber (1999) Framing effects of television news coverage of social protest. <i>Journal of Communication</i> . Vol. 49, Iss. 3; p. 3 (21 pages).

Week 9	15 May	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour Classic concept of Agenda Setting -- Protest, and the disadvantaged voice, Investigative journalism.</p> <p>Second Hour Classic concept of Agenda Setting -- The drama of scandal and the myth of conspiracy.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: Discuss McCleod and Detenber reading.</p> <p>Readings: for Week 10</p> <p>Stamm, Keith, Michelle Johnson and Brennon Martin (1997). Difference among newspapers, television, and radio in their contribution to knowledge of the contract with America. <i>Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly</i>, 74, 687-702.</p>
Week 10	22 May	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour Television versus print -- Differences in structure and format, audience response. Vividness effect. Liberal educational presumption of the news ideal and television versus print.</p> <p>Second Hour Photo Journalism, Cowboys and the power of Image.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: Discussion of Stamm et al article.</p> <p>Readings for Week 11:</p> <p>Schudson Chapter 12</p> <p>Reminder - Essay (3,000 words)</p> <p>Due Wednesday 19 JUNE</p>
Week 11	29 May	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour New Media Old Institutions</p> <p>Second Hour Analysing the news -- Coverage of Lebanon versus Israel.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: Discuss essay. Study guide for Short Test 3.</p>
Week 12	5 June	<p>Lecture Topics:</p> <p>First Hour Analysing the news – Race, Disasters and the international flow of news.</p> <p>Second Hour Analysing the news –Disasters, localisation and the third person effect.</p> <p>Tutorial Activity: Short Test 3</p>

Reminder - Essay (3,000 words), Due Wednesday 19 JUNE