

MDIA 403 Mass Media and Popular Culture

Trimester 2 2013

15 July to 17 November 2013

30 Points

TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: 15 July to 18 October 2013
Mid-trimester break: 26 August to 8 September 2013

WITHDRAWAL DATES

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds
If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination (aegrotats), refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Lectures

Wednesday 2.10 - 4.00pm AMLT105

Additional screening times may be scheduled in order to allow students to view material in groups. Attending these screenings will not be compulsory, although viewing the assigned material will be. Relevant information will be posted on Blackboard.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Anita Brady anita.brady@vuw.ac.nz 04 463 6853 Room 205, 81 Fairlie Terrace Office Hours: Tbc

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All announcements, course readings, additional recommendations for reading, and information related to assignments will 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.

PRESCRIPTION

This course is an advanced study of a selected form of mass media culture, in the context of the operation of the international culture industries. Aspects to be addressed may include economic production, authorship texts, theories of consumption, the production of norms, issues of globalisation, and celebrity culture. In 2013 the course will focus on media scandals.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into three sections. Section one contextualises the function of scandal within the field of celebrity culture. Section two examines the “conditions of possibility” that enable particular scandals to emerge in popular media culture, and the form they take. It approaches scandal from a variety of angles that are connected by considerations of embodiment, place, subjectivity and commodity culture. In section three we reflect on how the meaning of scandal can be determined by our discursive and theoretical location.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students passing the course should be able to:

- 1) read and engage critically with theory related to mass media, popular culture and scandal
- 2) utilise theoretical material in a critical assessment of media texts
- 3) conceive of and pursue independent research projects
- 4) critically engage with, and provide academic feedback on, other students’ work
- 5) critically reflect on their own intellectual development

TEACHING FORMAT

Lectures in this course will be in seminar format, designed to help students develop their own research interests and skills as media scholars. Student participation is therefore critical to the delivery and success of this course. Students should come to class:

- familiar with **all** the media examples on Blackboard for that week
- having completed the readings,
- prepared to engage with the material and their peers.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- Submit assignments 1, 2 and 4 to Turnitin.

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week. Students should expect to spend an average of 20+ hours per week on this class over the course of the trimester, for a total of 300 hours. This is standard for a 400 level course.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Assignment 1: Media Engagement Exercises, total word count of chosen four exercises + critical reflection (2,000-2,500 words)	25%	1, 2, 5	Exercise: Due each week in-class from weeks 2-9. Chosen four + critical reflection: Due 2pm Mon 30 Sept. You must submit it through Turnitin and attach a Turnitin receipt on hard copy before submitting it through the MDIA Drop Slot at 83FT.
2	Assignment 2: Celebrity Scandal Case Study Essay Draft and Peer Feedback (2,000 words)	20%	1-3	2pm Mon 19 Aug. You must submit it through Turnitin and attach a Turnitin receipt on hard copy before submitting it through the MDIA Drop Slot at 83FT.
3	Assignment 3: Independent Research Essay Draft (3,000 words) and Peer Feedback (500 words)	15%	1-4	Draft due on Blackboard: 2pm Mon 16 Sept Peer Feedback due on Blackboard: 2pm Tues 24 Sept
4	Assignment 4: Independent Research Essay Final Draft (3,000 words)	40%	1-3	2pm Fri 18 Oct. You must submit it through Turnitin and attach a Turnitin receipt on hard copy before submitting it through the MDIA Drop Slot at 83FT.

Assignment 1: Media Engagement Exercises (300-500 words, due each week in class in Weeks 2-9, chosen four + critical reflection due 2pm Mon 30 Sept) Worth 25% of your final grade (5% for each of four + 5% critical reflection).

Each Thursday in Weeks 1-8, a selection of media texts will be posted to Blackboard. For this assignment, you are required each week to choose **one** of those media texts and write a paragraph length critical engagement with it that draws on an aspect of **one** of the readings for the following week (this could be a quote, theoretical reference, example used, or any other aspect of the reading). In week 10 you will choose 4 of these, and submit them along with a 300-500 word reflection on your critical development in the course as reflected in your chosen paragraphs (your critical reflection should engage with at least 2 of your chosen paragraphs).

The expectations for this assignment will be discussed in detail in Weeks 1 and 9.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This assignment is an adaptation of the “Critical Journal Entries” assignment used in MDIA 407.

Please note:

- Late submissions of the weekly paragraphs WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. For every week that you do not submit (except in extenuating and unforeseen circumstances) you will forfeit 12.5% (out of 100) of the final grade for the assignment.
- Your bibliography and in-text referencing must be formatted in MLA-style. Guidelines for MLA can be found in the SEFTMS Handbook on Blackboard, and here:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- You must submit the final assignment to Turnitin before handing it in to the MDIA Drop Slot. You must attach a Turnitin receipt to your hard copy.

Assignment 2: Celebrity Scandal Case Study (2,000 words). Due 2pm Mon 19 Aug. Worth 20% of your final grade.

Choose a recent celebrity scandal covered in the media. Drawing on your chosen scandal, and the readings for weeks 1-4, discuss the relationship between celebrity culture and the function of scandal.

Please note:

- You do not have to utilise all the readings, however you should utilise readings from at least 2 different weeks.
- You can utilise additional readings in your essay.
- You cannot use an example provided for the Media Engagement exercises.
- Your bibliography and in-text referencing must be formatted in MLA-style. Guidelines for MLA can be found in the SEFTMS Handbook on Blackboard, and here:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- You must submit this assignment to Turnitin before handing it in to the MDIA Drop Slot. You must attach a Turnitin receipt to your hard copy.

Assignment 3: Independent Research Essay Draft (3,000 words) and Peer Feedback (500 words). Draft due: 2pm Monday 16 Sept; Peer Feedback due: 2pm Tues 24 Sept. Worth 15% of your final grade.

This assignment requires you to submit a draft of your final assignment for blind peer review, and to provide peer feedback on another student’s essay. Assignment 4 requires you to produce a detailed case study of a media text or event that draws on material covered in the second part of the course. For Assignment 3, you are required to submit a complete draft of that final essay (3,000 words) by **2pm Mon 16 Sept**. This **must be submitted by this time or you will lose 15% of your final grade (see below)**. If, due to extenuating circumstances covered by the Media Studies lateness policy, you cannot submit by this time, you must contact Anita as early as possible.

Your essay will then be given to another student who will conduct a blind peer review of your draft. You, in turn, will conduct a blind peer review of another student’s essay. Your review will be due by **2pm Tues 24**

Sept. There will be a template for this feedback, and the expectations of the reviewers will be discussed in detail in class.

Your mark for this assignment is as follows:

5% Essay draft. All students who submit a **complete** draft on the due date will receive 5%. This is a participation mark. Your draft will not be graded by Anita.

10% Peer review (500 words). You will be graded on the quality of the peer review you provide. That grade will be determined by how well you answer the questions on the feedback template. The marking criteria for this assignment will be discussed in class, and posted on Blackboard.

GUIDELINES FOR PEER FEEDBACK COMPONENT:

1. Your draft must be complete. What this means is that you should consider this an essay deadline – i.e. your draft should be handed in in the same form as when you submit an essay for grading. It should have an introduction, argument, conclusion, complete paragraphs, correct referencing and bibliography. It should not be notes, ideas etc.
2. **No part of your grade for this assignment is determined by peer feedback on your work.** Your grade is determined by a) whether you hand in a draft and b) the quality of the feedback you provide.
3. If you do not submit a draft, you will not receive someone else's draft for peer review. This means that you will lose 15% of your grade.
4. All reviews will be done "blind". This means that you will not know whose work you are reviewing, or who has reviewed your work.
5. Please be collegial in your feedback. We will discuss this more fully, but, in general, think about the type of feedback that you would find useful, as well as the tone in which you would like it expressed.
6. You do not need to submit either part of this assignment to Turnitin. However, you need to submit electronic versions of your draft, and your feedback, to Blackboard.

GUIDELINES FOR ESSAY COMPONENT:

1. Your chosen topic does not have to be a media scandal (as per Lull & Hinnerman's typology). Your essay should engage with questions of what gets to count as scandal in culture as this is a key theme of section 2 of the course.
2. You can utilise readings and themes from section 1 of the course in addition to material covered in section 2.
3. You cannot use the scandal you used in Assignment 2, or an example discussed extensively in the readings.
4. You may be able to use an example provided for the Media Engagement exercises, however if you wish to do so you must discuss this with Anita to ensure that you fulfill the "independent research" component of this assignment.
5. Your bibliography and in-text referencing must be formatted in MLA-style. Guidelines for MLA can be found in the SEFTMS Handbook on Blackboard, and here:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Assignment 4: Independent Research Essay Final Draft (3,000 words). Due 2pm Fri 18 Oct. Worth 40% of your final grade

This is the final draft of the essay you submitted for peer review in Assignment 3. The extent to which you revise your original draft and utilise the feedback you were given is up to you, however this should not be exactly the same piece of work you handed in for Assignment 3. In redrafting your essay for submission you should consider the feedback you received, the feedback you gave, issues covered in the course since your first draft, and other developments in your thinking and reading.

Please note:

- Your bibliography and in-text referencing must be formatted in MLA-style. Guidelines for MLA can be found in the SEFTMS Handbook on Blackboard, and here: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- You must submit this assignment to Turnitin before handing it in to the MDIA Drop Slot. You must attach a Turnitin receipt to your hard copy.

Please note: Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Note also that Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

All written work must be double-spaced and in 12-point font.

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section of Blackboard.

Hard-copy assignments (excluding the weekly Media Engagement exercises) are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office.

Your essay draft and peer feedback are to be submitted as an MS Word file through Blackboard. We will discuss how to do this and preserve anonymity in class. Your marked assignment will be found on Blackboard in the same section.

Your marked assignment will be handed back in class or during your Course Coordinator's 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.

PENALTIES

Except where specified above, 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.

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. 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.

SET TEXTS

Set texts and recommended reading for each week will be made available via the MDIA 403 Blackboard site.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

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 may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and email address for this course:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	17 July	PART ONE: THEORISING CELEBRITY CULTURE L1: Truth, discourse and scandalous events
Week 2	24 July	L2: Celebrity Culture 1
Week 3	31 July	L3: Celebrity Culture 2
Week 4	7 Aug	L4: The function of scandal
Week 5	14 Aug	L5: Scandal, misperformance and cultural fields
Week 6	21 Aug	PART TWO: THE DISCURSIVE PRODUCTION OF SCANDAL L6: En-gendering scandal
Mid Trimester Break:	Monday 26 August to Sunday 8 September 2013	
Week 7	11 Sept	L7: Scandalous bodies
Week 8	18 Sept	L8: Scandal and place
Week 9	25 Sept	L9: Scandal and the national imaginary
Week 10	2 Oct	L10: TBA
Week 11	9 Oct	L11: TBA
Week 12	16 Oct	L12: Conclusions