

MDIA 301 Media Theory and Cultural Production

Trimester 1 2015

2 March to 1 July 2015

20 Points



"Critical Theory Resources for Consciousness Culture." *Reality Sandwich*. Jeremy D. Johnson, Jan. 2014. Web. 2 Feb. 2015. < <http://realitysandwich.com/248116/critical-theory-resources-for-consciousness-culture/>>

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-Trimester break: 3 to 19 April 2015

Last assessment item due: 15 June 2015

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Tuesday 3.10-5.00pm Hugh Mackenzie HMLT103

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 301 site on Blackboard: go to “Tutorial Sign Up” and then follow the instructions under the “S-Cubed Log In” link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:

Dr Minette Hillyer minette.hillyer@vuw.ac.nz 04 463 9746 Room 101, 81 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: Tuesday, 12 noon - 2pm or by appointment.

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 Victoria 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 will miss out on important information.

PRESCRIPTION

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

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. summarise, explain, and critically evaluate the claims made in scholarly texts;
2. discuss, apply, and critique theoretical approaches to the production of culture;
3. demonstrate an understanding of the historical and theoretical specificity of a variety of approaches to theorising culture;
4. use and produce feedback on the clarity and structure of written work; and
5. demonstrate writing and research skills appropriate to a third-year University course.

TEACHING FORMAT

1 x 2 hour lecture per week

1 x 50 minute tutorial per week in weeks 2-11. Tutorial times in week 12 will be set aside for consultation about the final assignment.

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

This course is designed to be interactive and participatory. ***Students must come to class having completed the assigned readings for that week.*** The course is organised roughly according to chronology, and under the following thematic headings:

- Industrial Arts
- The Culture Industry
- Texts and Readers
- National Subjects
- The Networked Self

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

- submit all pieces of assessment as specified in the instructions,
- attend at least **7** lectures and
- attend at least **8** tutorials.

WORKLOAD

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

Per week, this equates to:

Lecture / Tutorial attendance: 3 hours

Reading: 4 hours

Revision / research: 6 hours

An additional 46 hours (in total) should be set aside for the completion of assessment.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Assignment 1: Reading summaries, 2 x 600 words.	20%	1 and 5	Wednesday, 10am, weeks 2-5
2	Assignment 2: Peer feedback exercise, 300-500 words.	10%	4 and 5	In tutorials, week 8
3	Assignment 3: Research essay, 2,500 words.	40%	1 to 5	2pm, Monday 18 May
4	Assignment 4: Take Home Assignment, 1,800 words total.	30%	1, 2, 3 and 5	10am, Monday 15 June

Assignment One: Reading Summaries 2x 600 words, due each Wednesday, 10am, weeks 2-5 depending on topic. 20% of final grade.

For this assignment you are required to write **two** summaries of approximately 600 words each of readings assigned between weeks 2 and 5. Your summaries should be written in prose, rather than in note form, and avoid bullet points. For each summary, you should:

- summarise the main argument, or thesis,
- identify any key terms or concepts, and any significant examples, and
- note any larger questions, or theoretical or social contexts which appear to motivate the writer.

Note that your task here is not to critique the argument, but to summarise it, as if you were explaining it to your reader.

Choosing your readings

You are required to submit **two** reading summaries, in **two different weeks**. You **may not** choose readings which are recommended, rather than required (see the course programme, below). Note that the recommended readings should be very helpful to you in understanding the text.

Choose **two** readings from the following list to summarise:

Week 2: **EITHER**, Balázs, Béla. "Three Addresses By Way of a Preface"
 OR, Kracauer, Siegfried. "Film 1928 / Cult of Distraction"

Week 3: Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version."

Week 4: Adorno, Theodor. "On Popular Music"

Week 5: Barthes, Roland. "Myth Today"

Each summary must be accompanied by a correct bibliographic citation in MLA style (see the SEFTMS Student Handbook for guidelines). Your primary focus should be the assigned text; however, you can use the recommended readings and other resources to help you. If you do, make sure that these are also included in your bibliography.

Assessment criteria

In each week in which you write a summary, you will be expected to take an active role in class discussion. While you are not graded on your participation, ***attending and participating in class in the week in which your chosen reading is assigned is an essential part of this assignment.*** Given the deadline, your summary should be substantially complete by the time of your tutorial.

You will be graded on:

- your ability to accurately summarise an argument and identify its key characteristics;
- your ability to write clearly and concisely.

Given the word count, quotations should be kept to a minimum. Remember that these summaries must not simply replicate lecture notes.

Resources

You may find the following resources useful:

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/studyhub/PDF/EffectiveReading.pdf

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/slss/studyhub/PDF/CriticalReadingAndThinking.pdf

You can also make use of the SEFTMS Student Handbook for advice on reading, writing, and bibliographic style.

Submission

You should hand in your final written assignment in hard copy to the MDIA drop slot in 83 Fairlie Terrace, and electronically to Turnitin (via Blackboard) by 10am on the Wednesday of the relevant week. Do not hand in your assignment during class. *Your marks for the assignment will not be released unless your work has been submitted to Turnitin.*

Assignment 2: Peer Feedback Essay Introduction Exercise, in tutorials, Week 8 (8 May), 10% of final grade.

In Week 8 you must bring a draft of the introductory paragraph of the essay you will submit for Assignment 3 to class. You will use that draft in a peer feedback exercise designed to improve the structure of your essay and the clarity of your argument.

Guidelines

- Your mark for this assignment is for participation only. I will not mark your introduction, or the worksheet you will fill out in the tutorial exercise. However, I will look at both to ensure that you have completed the task(s) set, and can be awarded your 10 marks. **Please note:** If you complete both parts of this assignment you will receive 10 marks. This is not a mark out of 10. You will either receive 10 marks for completing the assignment, or 0 marks for not completing it. This means that if you only complete part of it, you will receive 0 marks. No part of your grade will be determined by feedback from your peers.
- In order to complete this assignment and receive your 10 marks you must turn up to class in Week 8 (19 September). Provision will be made for those students who cannot attend that week due to genuinely unforeseen and extenuating circumstances.

- In Week 7, time will be set aside to discuss what a good introductory paragraph is, and other aspects of this assignment.
- Your introductory paragraph draft must be a genuine draft (we will discuss what this means in Week 7). It cannot be a list of ideas or bullet points.

Assignment 3: Research Essay. 2,500 words, due 2pm, Monday 18 May. 40% of final grade.

Choose one media text or example to analyse, and write an essay of approximately 2,500 words in response to **one** of the following questions:

1. What role has theory been assigned in relation to the production or interpretation of new forms of media culture?
2. How has culture been understood as the product of industry, as opposed to, or as well as the product of everyday experiences?
3. What role has pleasure played in the theorization of media culture?
4. How have different subjects of culture been addressed, or understood, in media theory?
5. What has been the significance of place or locality in theories of media and culture?

Guidelines

- **Your essay should make extended use of a media example or examples, and must display a sustained, critical engagement with one or more works of critical theory that you have encountered in class.**
- Your essay must contain, and be structured by, a thesis statement; that is, you must make an argument.
- You must make use of **at least two reputable academic sources** to build your argument.
- You may make use of the texts you summarised for Assignment One in this assignment, but you must not duplicate work from that assignment.
- Your essay must be accompanied by a list of Works Cited, in MLA style. See the SEFTMS Student Handbook for examples and guidelines.
- You must submit your work in hard copy to the MDIA drop slot in 83 Fairlie Terrace, and in electronic form to Turnitin (via Blackboard), by 2pm, Monday 18 May. *Your mark will not be released until your work has been seen on Turnitin.*

Assessment criteria

You will be graded on:

- your ability to integrate theory and analysis, and to make a critically engaged and theoretically informed argument;
- your ability to write in a way which is appropriate for the academic setting, and to make good use of supporting evidence;
- the quality of your written expression, including in particular your introduction, conclusion, and thesis statement;
- your ability to follow an academic referencing style (here, MLA).

There are extensive essay writing guidelines in the SEFTMS Student Handbook; it is strongly recommended that you consult them.

Assignment 4: Take Home Assignment, 1,800 words total. Due 10am, Monday 15 June. 30% of final grade. This assignment will be distributed and discussed in lecture and tutorials in week 11.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

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.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: **83 Fairlie Terrace**. Attach an assignment cover sheet found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

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

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 1 July 2015.**

Penalties

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.

SET TEXTS

Readings will be made available electronically via Blackboard.

Please note: There are usually two to three required readings each week. **These are essential, and must be completed *before class*.**

RECOMMENDED READING

See Course Programme (final page). A list of required and recommended reading will also be made available on the MDIA 301 Blackboard site.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course.

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/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile

- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week	Lecture date	Topic and assigned readings	Assessment
Week 1	3 March	<p>Introduction - Key Concepts</p> <p>Read: Barlow, David M., and Brett Mills. "What Is Theory?" Bennett, Tony. "Culture." Frow, John. "Theory." Williams, Raymond. "Culture."</p>	
Week 2	10 March	<p>Industrial Arts</p> <p>Read: Balázs, Béla. "Three Addresses By Way of a Preface." Kracauer, Siegfried. "Cult of Distraction."</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Morozov, Evgeny. "Only Disconnect"</p>	Week two summary reading due Wednesday 11 March, 10am.
Week 3	17 March	<p>Read: Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility: Second Version." Robinson, Andrew "Walter Benjamin: Art, Aura, and Authenticity."</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Ross, Alex. "The Naysayers."</p>	Week three summary reading due Wednesday 18 March, 10am.
Week 4	24 March	<p>The Culture Industry</p> <p>Read: Adorno, Theodor W. "On Popular Music." Gendron, Bernard. "Theodor Adorno meets the Cadillacs." Polan, Dana. "Vagaries of A Concept: The Culture Industry."</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno. "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" Negus, Keith. "The Production of Culture: Introduction, and The Culture Industry."</p>	Week four summary reading due Wednesday 25 March, 10am.
Week 5	31 March	<p>Texts and Readers</p> <p>Read: Barthes, Roland. "Myth Today." Roth, Marco. "Roland Barthes: Myths We Don't Outgrow."</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Jeffries, Stuart. "But What Does It Mean?"</p>	Week five summary reading due Wednesday 1 April, 10am.

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

Noonan, Will. *“Nouvelles Mythologies and the Bicycle: Barthes in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.”*

Easter/Mid Trimester Break: Friday 3 to Sunday 19 April 2015

Week 6	21 April	Read: Hall, Stuart. “Encoding / Decoding.”	
Week 7	28 April	Read: Ang, Ien. <i>“Dallas and the Ideology of Mass Culture.”</i> Modleski, Tania. “The Search for Tomorrow in Today’s Soap Operas: Notes on a Feminine Narrative Form.”	
Week 8	5 May	National subjects Read: Anderson, Benedict. “Imagined Communities: Nationalism’s Cultural Roots” Smith, Jo. “Parallel Quotidian Flows: Maori Television On Air.”	Peer feedback exercise in tutorials this week.
Week 9	12 May	Read: Appadurai. Arjun. “The Work of Reproduction in the Age of Mechanical Art.” West, Amy. <i>Dream Home (Land): Anxious Fantasies of Settlement in Home Improvement Television.</i> ”	Research essay due Monday 18 May, 2pm.
Week 10	19 May	The Networked Self Read: Hall, Stuart. “Cultural Identity and Diaspora.” Henderson, April. “Māori Boys, Michael Jackson Dance Moves and that 1984 Structure of Feeling”	
Week 11	26 May	Castells, Manuel “The Self in the Informational Society.” Baudrillard, Jean. “The Procession of Simulacra.”	
Week 12	2 June	Course wrap-up	Take home assignment due Monday, June 15, 10am.