

# MDIA 102: Media Society and Politics

Trimester 2 2016

11 July to 13 November 2016

20 Points



Source: Peter Nicholson (2006) [www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au](http://www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au)

## IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates:	11 July to 16 October 2016
Mid-trimester break:	22 August to 4 September 2016
Study period:	17 – 20 October 2016
Examination/Assessment period:	21 October to 12 November 2016

Note: Students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)).

## CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

### Lectures

Wednesday	11.00am-1.00pm	Maclaurin MCLT103
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**Tutorials**

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via myAllocator. Instructions can be found on the MDIA 102 site on Blackboard under “Tutorial instructions”. Remember to record your tutorial time, day and room for future reference. Tutorial rooms will be listed on myAllocator, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office at 83 Fairlie Terrace.

**NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS**

**Staff:** Kathleen Kuehn  
Email: kathleen.kuehn@vuw.ac.nz  
Phone: 04 463 6991  
Room: 304, 83 Fairlie Terrace (FT83 304)  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-4pm and by appointment

**Admin Tutor:** Russ Kale  
Email: russ.kale@vuw.ac.nz  
Room: 206, 83 Fairlie Terrace (FT83 206)  
Office Hours: TBA

**Māori and Pasifika Support Tutor:** Trae Te Wiki  
Email: trae.tewiki@vuw.ac.nz  
Room: von Zedlitz vZ 807  
Office Hours: TBA

**COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

All course related information, and any additional information that students may find useful, will be available on the MDIA 102 Blackboard site. Lecture notes will be uploaded to Blackboard once all tutorials have been completed for the week. **Please note:** these lecture notes are an outline only and must *not* be considered an adequate substitute for lecture attendance.

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 is an introductory course for students interested in exploring the role of the media in shaping society and politics. The course discusses the rise of the mass-media, the control and regulation of media institutions, and the role of the media in shaping public opinion. It will also assess the impact of current developments such as independent media, convergence, digitisation, globalisation and the concentration of media ownership.

**COURSE CONTENT**

MDIA 102 focuses on the field of the media through the exploration of the relationships between politics, economics, technologies, histories, institutions, and practices. The course looks at mass media effects debates, the control and regulation of media institutions and practices, the ways in which the media shape and contribute to political practices and democratic process, the nature of news production, and how media technologies contribute to social change.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)**

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Have acquired a practical familiarity with, the concepts of mass media, political economy, the public sphere, media industries and institutions, media practices, and media technologies;
2. Have developed and practiced techniques of scholarship and methods of analysis of the media;
3. Be familiar with the literacies of academic writing;
4. Contribute to, and facilitate, group discussion.

### TEACHING FORMAT

This course requires students to attend 1 weekly two-hour lecture and 1 weekly 50-minute tutorial (in each of weeks 2- 12). There will be no tutorials in Week 6.

Tutorials are essential to completing the course successfully as they are an opportunity to develop your understanding, ask questions, receive information about assignments, and develop the analytical skills required in media studies.

All students are expected to complete that week's set reading prior to attending each tutorial and undertake other reasonable preparations for effective participation. Students who do this will find tutorials much more useful, and will be better prepared for the final exam.

### MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are no mandatory requirements for this course.

### WORKLOAD

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

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item	%	CLO(s)	Due date
1 <b>Assignment 1:</b> Essay (1,200 words): worth 30% of final grade. (MDIA Drop Box outside the SEFTMS Admin Office, 83 Fairlie Terrace). You must submit your essay to Turnitin prior to handing in your hard copy. <b>Essays not submitted to Turnitin will not be marked.</b> Additional instructions and details about the essay will be issued in lecture/tutorials and on Blackboard.	30%	1, 2, 3 and 4	Monday 15 August, 5pm
2 <b>Assignment 2:</b> Essay (1,200 words): worth 30% of final grade. (MDIA Drop Box outside the SEFTMS Admin Office, 83 Fairlie Terrace). You must submit your essay to Turnitin prior to handing in your hard copy. <b>Essays not submitted to Turnitin will not be marked.</b> Additional instructions and details about the essay will be issued in lecture/tutorials and on Blackboard.	30%	1, 2, 3, and 4	Monday 3 October, 5pm
3 <b>Assignment 3:</b> Final Exam (2 hours): Worth 40% of final grade. There will be some lecture and tutorial time set aside to discuss the exam, and guidelines will be provided. The University examination period is between 21 October and 12 November 2016.	40%	1, 2, 3, and 4	TBD

- All work submitted in this course must be correctly referenced and include an accurate bibliography. Referencing and bibliographies must be formatted in a consistent style. (The SEFTMS Student Handbook available on Blackboard gives clear instructions on MLA style).
- All MDIA 102 students are expected to consult the SEFTMS Student Handbook in preparing their assignments. The Handbook contains clear and detailed advice on how to produce written work of an acceptable academic standard.
- **Please note:** You should utilise (and reference) reputable academic sources in your assignment research and writing. The Handbook contains information on the use of internet sources, make sure you read it. **NB: Wikipedia and personal blogs are not reputable academic sources.**
- Make sure you reference all the works you use to inform your assignment correctly. Failure to do this may be considered plagiarism:  
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism>
- [Student Learning](#) can also help you improve your essay writing skills.

### Marking Criteria

For all written assessments in MDIA 102, marks are allocated on the basis of format (e.g. appropriate essay structure, referencing), accuracy of expression (including grammatical accuracy and spelling), explanations of theories and concepts, application of theories and concepts to relevant examples, overall rigour of argument and evidence, and evidence of original/critical thought and overall effort.

### 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. Please do not use a plastic folder.

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 Friday 11 November 2016**

#### 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

MDIA 102 Student Notes.

You can order 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).

### RECOMMENDED READING

Additional reading will be made available through Blackboard / Talis.

**Further Recommended Reading:**

In addition to the weekly required readings there is also a further recommended reading or screening each week. These are listed in the course programme at the end of this outline. All are available on electronic or closed reserve, or in the AV section of the library.

There are also a number of books that are recommended as useful to students of MDIA 102. These are listed below. All should be available in the library:

- Devereux, Eoin, (Ed.) *Media Studies: Key Issues and Debates*. London: Sage, 2007.
- Devereux, Eoin. *Understanding the Media. 2nd ed.* London: Sage, 2007.
- Hirst, Martin and John Harrison. *Communication and New Media: From Broadcast to Narrowcast*. Melbourne: OUP, 2007.
- Hirst, M., Phelan, S., & Rupar, V. (Eds.) *Scooped: The politics and power of journalism in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland, AUT Press, 2012
- Goode, Luke and Nabeel Zuberi, (Eds). *Media Studies in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Auckland: Pearson, 2004.
- McQuail, D. *McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2010.
- Van Belle, Douglas A. & Kenneth M. Mash. *A Novel Approach to Politics - introducing political science through books, movies and popular culture*. Washington DC, CQ Press, 2010.

**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:
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**STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://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.

In the past, students have requested shorter readings, more multi-media materials and that the Course Coordinator talk slower and complain less about poor attendance at lectures. The Course Coordinator has replaced some of the lengthier readings with more contemporary (but not necessarily shorter) readings and incorporates more video material into lectures and tutorials. The Course Coordinator makes a concerted effort to talk slower, but now records lectures for clarity; however, she maintains that consistent attendance to lectures is instrumental to performing well in this course.

**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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progess](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progess) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)

- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the Assessment Handbook, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

## COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	13 Jul	<p><b>Course Introduction: The Rise of Mass Media</b></p> <p><b>NB: NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK</b></p> <p><i>Required:</i></p> <p>Gorman, L. &amp; McLean, D. (2009). "The Rise of New Media." <i>Media &amp; Society into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i>. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 230-263.</p> <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <p>McQuail, Dennis. (2005). <i>The Rise of Mass Media. McQuail's Mass Communication Theory</i> (5<sup>th</sup> Ed). London: Sage, pp. 24-45.</p> <p><i>Overview:</i> What do we mean when we talk about 'the media'? Have media always looked the same or performed the same functions? This lecture will provide an overview of the way Media Studies scholarship tends to historicise media within the context from which it both arises and helps construct. The rise of 'mass media' will be discussed in relation to the <i>industrial age</i>, and 'networked media' or 'new media' within the context of the <i>information age</i>. Providing this historical context aims to show how technologies develop out of other political, economic or cultural developments as opposed to some 'inevitable' technological evolution.</p>
Week 2	20 Jul	<p><b>Studying Media, Society &amp; Politics</b></p> <p><i>Required:</i></p> <p>O'Shaughnessy, M. &amp; Stadler, J. (2005). Chapter 2: <b>Media Studies</b>. <i>Media and Society: An Introduction</i> (3rd Ed). Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 10-30.</p> <p>Littlejohn, S.W. &amp; Foss, K.A. (2008). <b>The idea of theory</b> (Ch. 2). <i>Theories of Human Communication</i> (9<sup>th</sup> edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth, pp. 14-32.</p> <p><i>Overview:</i> The media play an important role in all facets of social, political, economic and cultural life. This lecture introduces some of these key approaches Media Studies scholars have developed in order to understand the complex relationship between media, society and politics. It provides an</p>

overview – and distinction – between some of the perspectives and key theories we'll discuss through the trimester.

Week 3 27 Jul

### Theories of Media Effects: The 'Dominant Paradigm'

*Required:*

Severin, W. & Tankard, J. (2001). **Effects of Mass Communication** (Chapter 13, pp. 56-86). *Communication Theories - Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Longman.

*Recommended:*

Macnamara, J. R. (2003). **Mass Media Effects: A Review of 50 Years of Media Effects Research**. New South Wales: CARMA.

*Overview:* Moral panics about what the media 'do' to us has been a longstanding public concern, and a topic of much debate amongst media scholars. One of the reasons governments censor certain types of media content stems from the belief that media have considerable power in shaping our ideas, beliefs and values. This, of course, assumes a passive and uncritical audience. Is it really the case that 'watching violent content = exhibiting violent behaviour?' Is it really that simple? This week review the early history media effects scholarship, focusing primarily on the 'dominant paradigm' of quantitative behavioural analysis to understand these kinds of cause-effect questions.

Week 4 3 Aug

### Theories of Media Effects: Audience Reception

*Required:*

Schirato, T., Buettner, A, Jutel, T & Stahl, G. (2010). **Media Audiences**. *Understanding Media Studies* (pp. 92-109)

Croteau, D., Hoynes, W., & Milan, S. (2012). **Active audiences and the construction of meaning** (Chapter 8). *Media/Society*.

*Overview:* Many media scholars have highlighted the shortcomings of the dominant paradigm's focus on quantitative understandings of human behaviour, and have argued for a more in-depth understanding of the complexity of media reception. This week addresses the shift to audience reception research, and the ways it offers different ways of interpreting the 'effects' of media on audiences from the theories covered in Week 3. After this lecture, you should be able to identify and differentiate between the key media effects theories, what they can explain about the 'effects' of media on audiences, while pointing to some of their analytical shortcomings.

Week 5 10 Aug

### Normative Theories: Liberal-Pluralism & the Public Sphere

*Required:*

Croteau, D. & Hoynes, W. (2006). **Media, Markets and the Public Sphere** (Ch. 1). *The Business of the Media* (pp. 13-40).

*Recommended:*

Schirato, et al. *Understanding Media Studies: Media and the Public Sphere* (pp. 110-134).

*Overview:* A normative approach to studying the media views media as a valuable social institution for creating an informed citizenry and promoting a vibrant democratic society. As such, governments have historically created media policies aimed at promoting or preserving normative models of the media. We will discuss what constitutes a “normative” approach to media policy but also our expectation of what the media “ought” to do. A clear understanding of the media’s normative goals/functions will be important for later discussions about the media’s “watchdog” role, particularly in relation to media’s role during/leading up to wartime. This lecture also introduces the groundwork for thinking about how for-profit media firms’ commercial motivations or imperatives often undermine these normative commitments to the public interest.

Week 6      17 Aug      **Case Study in Normative Theory: The NZ Media Landscape**

Thompson, P.A. (2012). **Last chance to see? Public broadcasting policy and the public sphere in New Zealand** (pp. 94-111). In Hirst, M. Phelan, S. & Rupar, V. (Eds). *Scooped: Journalism, Politics and Power in New Zealand*. Auckland: AUT Media/JMAD.

**\*\*\* NO TUTORIALS TODAY \*\*\***

**Mid-Trimester Break:      22 August to 4 September**

Week 7      7 Sep      **Political Economy: Marxism vs. Liberal-Pluralism**

*Required:*

Devereux, E. (2014). **Media Ownership: Concentration and Conglomeration**. *Understanding the Media*. London: Sage (pp. 89-121).

O’Brien, J. (2007). **Meet the PayPal mafia**. *Fortune*.

*Overview:* The political economy of media aims to understand the way politics and economics intersect to effect media production and consumption. The liberal or classical model approaches this from a free market rationale that sees media consumers as rational economic actors, while the critical political economy model takes a Marxist approach to account for a range of powerful influences that intervene in the ‘rational’ consumption of media. Critical political economy, for instance, sees media texts as ideological tools for the ruling class, and as primarily concerned with profit over public interest. Highlighting the relationship between economics and politics (power) can help explain why media ownership structure and content looks the way it does; what does/doesn’t get reported; or why programmes like *Campbell Live* are cut from the broadcasting schedule despite their public interest appeal. Critical political economy can also contribute to our understanding of how the US media got it ‘wrong’ in covering the events leading up to the war in Iraq, as discussed in later weeks.

Week 8      14 Sep      **Media Spectacle & Consumer Culture**

*Required:*

Kellner, D. (2003). **Media culture and the triumph of the spectacle**. *Media Spectacle*. Routledge (pp. 1-33).



*Recommended:*

*Understanding Media Studies, The Media as Spectacle* (pp. 137-154)

*Overview:* Taking the commercial imperative of media corporations into account, the theoretical notion of 'spectacle' offers another way of understanding what comes to 'count' as news in a hyper mediated environment. We will discuss the broader implications of spectacle for journalism in terms of its influence over news reporting, and the potential impact for audiences and democracy.

Week 9      21 Sep      **Case Study: Media at War**

*Required:*

Brandenburg, H. (2005). **Journalists embedded in culture: War stories as political strategy.** In L. Artz and Y.R. Kamalipour [eds.] *Bring 'Em On: Media and Politics in the Iraq War.* Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, (pp. 225-237).

Kamiya, Gary. (10 April 2007). **Iraq: Why the media failed.** *Salon.com.*

*Recommended:*

The New York Times Editors. (26 May 2004). **The Times and Iraq.** *The New York Times.* [Blackboard]

**Buying the War** (Bill Moyers Show, 2007, USA).

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/btw/watch.html>

*Overview:* This week offers a specific case study demonstrating how and why the media "failed" to serve the public interest in the months leading up to the war in Iraq, and the repercussions this can have on societies at the global level. The case study exemplifies how the application of different theoretical approaches covered in previous weeks can explain how and why the media 'got it wrong' in the months leading up to the war in Iraq. We will also discuss why this matters to New Zealand and isn't just an "American" issue.

Week 10      28 Sep      **Digital Democracy: Politics Online**

*Required:*

Goodwin, I. (2012). **Power to the People? Web 2.0, Facebook, and DIY Cultural Citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand.** *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies, 12*(2), 110-134.

*Recommended:*

Castells, M. (2012). **Networking minds, creating meaning, contesting power.** *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age.* Cambridge: Polity Press (pp. 1-19).

*Overview:* There is a strong belief that new technologies and platforms, like social media, have the capability to spread revolution and democracy in unprecedented ways. The global spread of the Internet means there is widespread access to information and new ideas, the capacity to engage in free speech and expression, new forms of political and civic participation, etc. This week examines the notion of 'digital democracy', and the way the web has facilitated new forms of thinking and practicing politics in the digital age.

Specifically, we look at the role Facebook is playing in transforming expressions and performances of 'citizenship'.

Week 11 5 Oct

**Global Media**

*Required:*

Douglas, S. J. **The turn within: The irony of technology in a globalized world.** *American Quarterly*, 58(3), pp. 619-638.

*Overview:* We live in an increasingly global world, yet are we really connecting? This week challenges the idea that new media, technologies and the Internet are constructing a more global, open society.

Week 12 12 Oct

**Catch-up, Course Wrap-Up & Review**

Reading TBD

**Study Period:** Monday 17 to Thursday 20 October 2016

**Examination Period:** Friday 21 October to Saturday 12 November 2016