

**MDIA 320 Cultural Identity and the Media (CRN 9918)**  
**2006 Trimester 2**  
**COURSE GUIDE**

**Course Description**

MDIA 320 draws on theories of identity and difference to consider the relationship between cultural identity and the media, focusing particularly (but not solely) on issues of cultural and ethnic identity. We will consider, in the New Zealand context, what it means to be Pakeha, and how this plays out in New Zealand media (MDIA201 covers other ethnicities in the New Zealand ethnoscape and mediascape). We will also look much more widely at issues of cultural identity and the media in a range of other countries, and across a range of media genre. The course will draw on contemporary debates surrounding postcolonialism, globalisation, hybridity, diasporic identity and cultural appropriation.

The intention behind this course is to be as student-friendly as reasonably possible. There is considerable room for students to pursue the topics which interest them the most. While the first five lectures will follow the topics set out below, we can be reasonably flexible with the remaining seven lectures depending on what seems the most interesting or relevant (or practicable!) at the time. See Lecture Timetable below for further information.

**Coordination and Teaching**

**Convenor:** Sue Abel,  
Room: 107, 42-44 Kelburn Parade,  
Tel.: 463 5233 ext 8411  
Email: [sue.abel@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:sue.abel@vuw.ac.nz)  
Office hours: Tuesday 3 – 4pm; Wed 2 – 3pm; Thurs 3 – 4 or by  
appointment

**Tutor:**  
Ngairé Shepherd ([ngaire.shepherd@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:ngaire.shepherd@vuw.ac.nz))

**Course Format:**

- Weekly two-hour lecture (with a 10 minute break in the middle)
- Weekly 50-minute tutorial starting Week 2

**Lectures:**

- Monday 3.10 – 5pm
- Hugh MacKenzie LT002

**Tutorials:**

These begin in Week 2 and run weekly. Lists of groups, meeting times and location will be posted on the notice board outside the Media Studies office, as well as on Blackboard by the end of Week 1. You must attend the same tutorial for the duration of the trimester, as tutorial exercises and participation (worth 20% of the course) will be assessed by your tutor.

## Blackboard

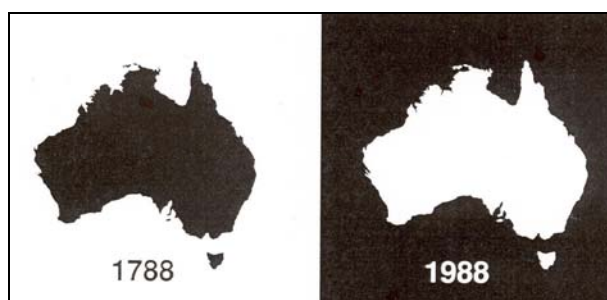
Information relevant to this paper including assessment, lecture notes, tutorial groupings, supplementary reading material for assignments and any general notices will be posted to Blackboard. Please check it regularly.

**NOTE:** Lecture notes that are posted contain the key points of a lecture, but do not replace your own notes. This paper is not designed as a distance learning course and notes posted on Blackboard are not intended as a substitute for attendance at lectures.

## Learning Aims and Objectives

Students passing this paper should be able to demonstrate:

- a sound knowledge of the key debates about 'race', ethnicity and cultural identity (Assessments 2 and 3)
- an understanding of debates about the media's contribution to notions of ethnic and cultural identity (Assessments 1, 2, 3 and 4)
- critical analysis skills, especially in terms of media constructions of cultural identity (Assessment 1)
- further development of written, spoken and visual communication literacies. (Assessments 1, 2, 3 and 4, especially 2 and 3)
- further development of research skills (Assessments 2 and 4)



A cartoon commenting on Australia's bicentenary

## Workload

This course is designed on the assumption that students will be able to commit an average of 16 hours a week, including lectures, tutorials, and academic reading, research and writing.

## Course Reading

**Set Text:** MDIA 320 Course Reader (2006) from Student Notes Distribution Centre. \$25.10

A list of recommended additional readings for specific topics, as well as of relevant films and other media texts, will be available on Blackboard.

Some texts are more difficult than others, and you will almost certainly come across unfamiliar terms and concepts in many readings. If you find the academic writings challenging, and if you do not fully understand them on first reading, rest assured that this experience is not unique to you and is a fundamental aspect of university study. You should read through such material two or three times, and come to tutorials ready to discuss any difficulties, issues and questions regarding the material. You can also post questions on the Discussion Board on Blackboard – anonymously, if you wish. I will check this every two days.

**Note:** You are under **NO** obligation to agree with the authors (or, for that matter, with the lecturer on this course). It is more important that you think for yourself, engage with the readings, the lectures and tutorial discussion with openness and thoughtfulness, and learn to articulate and argue for your own position.

**Dictionaries:** While it is always a good idea to look up terms you are unfamiliar with in a dictionary, many terms have a specific meaning in the context of media studies. For these you should consult specialist dictionaries (there are several in Central Reference at P87.5) or books of Key Concepts. Both John Hartley and Tim O’Sullivan have written useful books listing key concepts which are on Closed Reserve in the library.

There is also a Glossary of terms especially relevant to this course under Course Material on Blackboard. Post a question to the Discussion Board if you think other terms should be added.

## LECTURE OUTLINE 2006

As indicated above, the first five lectures will be as set out below, but final decisions about the remaining seven will be made in consultation with students. I have listed a lecture in each week, but I have added two alternative topics at the bottom. Your Course Reader contains readings for the first 13 topics listed.

<b>Week 1</b> 10 July	Course introduction and some basic definitions and concepts
<b>Week 2</b> 17 July	Otherness and Orientalism
<b>Week 3</b> 24 July	Whiteness; Being Pākehā
<b>Week 4</b> 31 July	Postcolonialism <i>First Tutorial Exercise for assessment due Thurs 3 August 4pm</i>
<b>Week 5</b> 7 August	Advertising, ‘race’ and ethnicity
<b>Week 6</b> 14 August	The Racial Politics of Humour <i>Essay due Wed 16 August 4pm</i>

### MID TRIMESTER BREAK

<b>Week 7</b> 4 September	News
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<b>Week 8</b> 11 September	Indigeneity and the Media
<b>Week 9</b> 18 September	Globalisation
<b>Week 10</b> 25 September	Diasporas
<b>Week 11</b> 2 October	'Race' and ethnicity on-line <i>Second Tutorial Exercise for assessment due Thurs 5 Oct 4pm</i>
<b>Week 12</b> 9 October	Audiences <i>Research Assignment due Thurs 12 Oct 4pm</i>

Other potential Lecture Topics:

- Sport, 'race' and cultural identity
- The "margins" fight back: some short films

### Mandatory Requirements & Assessment

MDIA 320 is internally assessed. In order to pass this course, you must submit ALL set work and attend at least 8 tutorials (if there is a legitimate reason for an absence, please provide your tutor with a note explaining this). Coursework incorporates the following:

- 1) Essay (2,000 – 2,500 words) 25%**  
Due Wednesday 16 August 4pm

An analysis of a film or television programme of your choice, using as a starting point:

- the arguments in Shohat and Stam's chapter 'Stereotypes, Realism and the Struggle over Representation'
- Said's theory of Orientalism
- Other theory covered in the first four weeks of lectures.

- 2) Oral seminars (to be completed in pairs) 25%**

A. (20%)

- Start with an analysis of a key reading (to be selected from a range available)
- Each person is to:
  - select and read a related article/chapter from the Library databases
  - select and read a related article/chapter from the references to the original article
  - select and browse two books in the library that have the same key words.
- this information is to be synthesised into a 15 minute oral presentation. A written copy of this is to be handed in, with additional comments on the research process.
- the presentation is to be completed in time to allow two respondents time to read it and prepare a response/questions etc

B. (5%)

You are to be respondents to the next week's presentation. This involves:

- preparing a brief response to the issues covered

- suggesting a list of questions which arise from the material
- taking responsibility for a wider tutorial discussion.

**3) Tutorial exercises and tutorial participation** **20%**

**4) Research assignment (2,500 – 3,000 words)** **30%**  
Due Thursday 12 October 4pm.

Discussion of a relevant issue or analysis of relevant texts, to be decided in consultation with your tutor. Suggested topics will be posted on Blackboard.

Criteria for all assessment will be available on available on Blackboard.

As is usual, extension on course work will not be given lightly. If you feel you have a justifiable reason for an extension, you need to communicate with the Course Coordinator, Sue Abel, **prior to** the due date. A written explanation along with any relevant documentation will be required.

Late essays and tutorial presentations will be subject to a penalty of one mark a day. Late tutorial assessment exercises will be subject to a penalty of .5 of a mark a day.

### Tutorial Exercises and Participation

Tutorials can be a vital component of undergraduate study. They provide a forum for collaborative learning in which small groups can discuss, clarify and debate the issues raised in readings and in lectures. They can also help you develop communication skills which will be valuable in any postgraduate area of work. Accordingly, tutorial exercises and participation make up 20% of the assessment for this course.

In the first 11 weeks of this course an exercise will be posted to “Tutorial Exercises” on Blackboard. To meet the requirements for completing this paper, you are required to complete **SIX** of these. Each exercise should be 350 – 500 words, and should demonstrate a reasonable attempt to deal with the substantive issues in the relevant readings. They are to be uploaded to your tutorial’s site on Blackboard by **midnight Sunday** following the relevant lecture. This is to allow your tutor time to read through them before tutorials the following week. You should bring a copy to your tutorial to help you in discussions, and to make further notes on. In Weeks 4 and 11 you will select one of the exercises you have completed and write it up in more detail (500 – 650 words). These are worth 7.5% each. They are to be handed in to the office by Thursday 4pm in the week they are due, and uploaded to Blackboard by Friday 5pm.

**NOTE:** As with the essays, these two exercises cannot be assessed unless you hand in both a hard copy to the office, and an electronic copy to Blackboard.

The other 5% of tutorial assessment will be based on the amount of effort you have put into the other tutorial exercises, and your participation in tutorials. Obviously your attendance will have some relevance here, so if you cannot attend a particular tutorial you should give your tutor a note to explain your absence so that this can be taken into account. To allow tutorial groups to settle down, and for you to become more familiar with your fellow students, your tutor, and some of the ideas underlying this course, participation assessment will not start until Week 4. Criteria for tutorial participation assessment will be discussed

in the first or second tutorials, after which official assessment criteria will be posted on Blackboard.

### Presentation of Written Work

Please type your essays in 12pt with 1.5 or double spacing and leave a reasonable margin for comments from the person marking it. Proofread essays carefully so as to eliminate typing, grammatical and punctuation errors. Students operating at 300-level are expected to be able to write with technical accuracy. Coursework grades will be compromised as a result of a lack of attention to the structure and accuracy of your writing, your referencing of sources through the essay, and your provision of a full bibliography. Poor expression, consistent mistakes in sentence structure and grammar, and the lack of a proper essay structure will automatically put essays into the C category or lower. It is **STRONGLY** recommended that if your essay writing skills have pulled your grades down in the past, you seek help from the Student Learning Service.

It is the responsibility of the student (rather than of the tutor) to ensure that coursework is completed and submitted/presented on time. Students should observe due dates for both the essay and tutorial exercises and understand that it is *not possible* to gain course completion for 320 without submitting/presenting *all* coursework.

MDIA320 assignments are checked electronically for plagiarism. This is something that is becoming increasingly common in universities around the world. You will be required to post a copy of your assignment to Blackboard. It will then be uplifted to Turnitin, where it will be checked electronically against all the information on the Internet, all other student assignments that have been submitted from many Universities, and textbooks. Assignment instruction sheets will detail how to hand in your work electronically.

We recognise that plagiarism often arises through misunderstandings and not knowing how to reference material you have used. The Student Learning Centre runs workshops on how to avoid plagiarism. You should also read the material about Plagiarism below, and on the University's website. SEE YOUR TUTOR if you have any doubts about the work that you are submitting.

As well as submitting work electronically, you need to hand in a hard copy (into the MDIA essay box in 42-44 KP). You are required to attach a cover sheet which you need to sign, indicating that you are aware of the University's policy on plagiarism, and that the assignment is all your own work. Your assignment will not be marked until this cover sheet is signed. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what plagiarism is, and what the University's policy on plagiarism is. Please do NOT sign the cover sheet if you do not understand these.



Stuart Hall, probably the leading academic in the area of 'race', cultural identity and the media

### General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at [www.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.vuw.ac.nz).

### Student and staff conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct)

The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct)

### Academic grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances)

### Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html)

### **Students with Impairments** (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

telephone: 463-6070

email: [disability@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:disability@vuw.ac.nz)

Dr. Joost de Bruin ([joost.debruin@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:joost.debruin@vuw.ac.nz); (04) 463 6846) is the Disability Liaison Person (DLP) for the Media Studies, Film and Theatre programmes. He can be contacted by students who have special needs.

### **Student Support**

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: [student-services@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:student-services@vuw.ac.nz)) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

[www.vuw.ac.nz/st\\_services/](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/)

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at [education@vuwsa.org.nz](mailto:education@vuwsa.org.nz)) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.