

MDIA 221 Special Topic: Media, War and Crisis

Trimester 1 2014

3 March to 2 July 2014

20 Points



Source: <http://www.dronesurvivalguide.org/>

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 3 March to 6 June 2014

Easter/Mid-Trimester break: 18 April to 4 May 2014

Last assessment item due: 16 June 2014

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

Lectures

Tuesday 9.00-10.50am 77 Fairlie Terrace Room 306

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the MDIA 221 site on Blackboard: go to "Tutorials" and then follow the instructions under the "S-Cubed - 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.

Film Screenings

In addition to lectures and tutorials this course includes three film screenings. Though attendance at these screenings is optional, students are encouraged to attend them. If they are unable to do so, the films are available for viewing via the Library.

Monday 10 March: *The Skycrawlers* (2008)

Monday 24 March: *Terminator Salvation* (2009)

Monday 5 May: *Operation 8: Deep in the Forest* (2011)

All screenings will be held in Room 203, 83 Fairlie Terrace, from 12.00pm-2.00pm.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff	Email	Phone	Room
Kim Wheatley	Kim.Wheatley@vuw.ac.nz	04 463 7471	Room 206, 81 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4.00pm-5.00pm; Wednesdays, 1.00pm-2.00pm.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course related information will be communicated via the MDIA 221 ST Blackboard site. Occasional emails will be sent through Blackboard to students' VUW email address. Therefore, if you do not use your VUW email address, it is important you set up a forward from the VUW email system to an email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

Representations of war have become increasingly ubiquitous. This course examines the mediation of a number of recent crises, both local and global, that deploy the language of warfare. Drawing on these case studies we develop a critical assessment of everyday media and its relationship to power, war and crisis.

COURSE CONTENT

This course examine the complex relationships between media, war and crisis. Rather than treating war as a conflict between two nation states, this course understands war as a condition that shapes many of our everyday experiences. This 'minimal' definition of warfare is then used to analyse a variety of crises, whose scope is both global and local. Rather than viewing each crisis as an exceptional event that "just happened," it examines the interconnectedness and globalised nature of crises as the products of a variety of social, cultural, military, economic and political processes and infrastructures.

Because the study of war remains relatively fragmentary and underdeveloped within the field of media studies this course necessarily involves students in the task of carving out new modes of enquiry. It begins by exploring the operation of power as a mediated and affective set of relations that shape our understandings of war. The course then proceeds to work through several different theoretical conceptions of mediated warfare. These will provide a critical and methodological basis for students to draw upon in the final section of the course, which will involve the analysis of a series of contemporary crises.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

- 1) Critically discuss the ways in which media shape our understanding of war and crisis
- 2) Demonstrate an understanding of the operation of power in a variety of contexts, both global and local
- 3) Engage with and apply theory and literature concerning media, war and crisis and
- 4) Develop analytical skills in terms of reading, writing, and discussion.

TEACHING FORMAT

Students enrolled in this course are required to attend one weekly two-hour lecture and one weekly 50 minute tutorial starting in Week 2. Lectures and tutorials are designed as interactive spaces of dialogue. Students should come to class having read that week's assigned readings, and prepared to engage in class discussion. Attendance to at least 8 of 11 tutorials is compulsory for course completion. Students are also encouraged to attend the 3 film screenings.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

- Submit hard copies of all written assignments on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work) and
- Attend 8 out of 11 tutorials.

WORKLOAD

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

Teaching Week:

1 x 2 hour lecture 2.0

1 x 1 hour tutorial 1.0

2 x 2 hours reading 4.0

1 x 6.5 hours revision/assessment 6.5

Total 13.5

Other periods:

Research, study, assessment work 39.0

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Critical Analysis: 1,500 word reading analysis	25%	2, 3, 4	11am Monday, 24 March
2	Essay: 2,000 word essay	35%	1, 3, 4	2pm Thursday, 17 April
3	Take Home Test: 2 x 1,000 word essay	40%	1, 2, 3, 4	2pm Monday, 16 June

All assignments for MDIA 221 must include referencing and a Works Cited list formatted in MLA style (see SEFTMS Student Handbook for guidelines). They must also be submitted in hard copy to the MDIA Drop Slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace. Tutorial time will be allocated to discuss each assignment.

Assignment One: Critical Analysis (1,500 words; worth 25% of final grade; due 11am Monday, 24 March)

This assignment covers material from Part 1 of the course. Students are required to write a critical analysis which compares and/or contrasts the readings from either Week 2 **or** Week 3. If you choose Week 2, you are to write a short essay that examines how the readings for that week engage with the notion of Fear. If you choose Week 3, you are to write a short essay that examines how the readings for that week engage with the notion of Power.

Note that this assignment is asking you to engage specifically with the readings, rather than to apply them to examples of media objects or practices. Your discussion needs to be focused, so do not feel that you need to cover every aspect of each reading. Instead, it is better to focus on how they work to provide an understanding of that week’s topic in relation to each other. You may refer to other scholarly material to support your discussion.

Assignment Two: Essay (2,000 words; worth 35% of final grade; due 2pm Thursday, 17 April)

This essay requires students to critically engage with the ways in which media-war is theorised. Students will choose an example of media-war, and will critically discuss how it conforms to (or confounds) the theoretical material discussed in Part 2 of the course (Weeks 4-7).

Specific assignment questions will be made available in Week 4.

Assignment Three: Take Home Test (2 x 1,000 word essay; worth 40% of final grade; due 2pm Monday, 16 June)

This take home test will involve two 1,000 word essays. Students will choose two essay topics from a selection to be provided in Week 10. These tests are to be submitted in the same manner as an essay and should be placed in the MDIA Drop Slot at 83FT. The take home test is designed to evaluate students’ mastery over all 4 course learning objectives, with particular focus on Part 3 of the course (Weeks 8-12).

The late due date of Monday, 16 June is intended to give students the maximum amount of flexibility in scheduling their work for this course around demands from other courses. Tutorial time will be allocated to discuss this assignment.

Late tests will not be accepted under any but the most extreme and documented circumstances.

Marking Scale:

A+ 90-100%, **A** 85-89%, **A-** 80-84%, **B+** 75-79%, **B** 70-74%, **B-** 65-69%, **C+** 60-64%, **C** 55-59%, **C-** 50-54%
 (Grades of C- and above are passes, otherwise: **D** 40-49%, **E** 0-39%)

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin the online plagiarism prevention tool.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the MDIA 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. 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. 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. **No assignment will be accepted after Wednesday 25 June 2014. The Course Coordinator will not give an extension beyond Wednesday 2 July 2014.**

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

All required reading will be made available electronically on the MDIA 221 Blackboard site.

RECOMMENDED READING

Additional recommended reading will be made available electronically on the MDIA 221 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

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/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1	4 March	<p>Introduction: Media-War</p> <p>Required Reading: Virilio, P. "Military Force is Based Upon Deception." <i>War and Cinema: The Logistics of Perception</i>. Trans. Patrick Camiller. London: Verso, 1989. 5-10. Print.</p> <p>Programme: No tutorial. Sign up for a tutorial this week via S-Cubed.</p>
		<p>Part 1: Affect & Power</p>
Week 2	11 March	<p>Affect: The Production of Fear</p> <p>Required Reading: Selected excerpts from: Ahmed, S. "The Affective Politics of Fear." <i>The Cultural Politics of Emotion</i>. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2004. 71-80. Print.</p> <p>Selected excerpts from: Davis, M. <i>Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster</i>. New York: Vintage Books, 1998. Print.</p> <p>Programme: Tutorials begin this week.</p> <p>Screening: 10 March from 12.00pm-2.00pm <i>The Skycrawlers</i> (2008).</p>
Week 3	18 March	<p>Power: Biopolitics/Necropolitics</p> <p>Required Reading: Selected excerpts from: Foucault, M. <i>Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1975-76</i>. Trans. David Macey. New York: Picador, 2003. Print.</p> <p>Selected excerpts from: Mbembe, A. "Necropolitics." Trans. Libby Meintjes. <i>Public Culture</i> 15.1 (2003): 11-40. Print.</p>
		<p>Part 2: Theorising Media-War</p>
Week 4	25 March	<p>Virtual Warfare</p> <p>Required Reading: Allen, R. "Virtual Soldiers, Cognitive Laborers." <i>Virtual War and Magical Death</i>. Eds. Neil L. Whitehead and Sverker Finnström. Duke UP: London, 2013. 152-170. Print.</p> <p>Bridle, J. "Drones and Dread." <i>Dread: The Dizziness of Freedom</i>. Ed. Juha van 't Zelfde. Amsterdam: Antennae, 2014. 79-87. Print.</p> <p>Assignment #1 (Critical Analysis): Due 11.00am Monday 24 March</p> <p>Screening: 24 March from 12.00pm-2.00pm <i>Terminator Salvation</i> (2009)</p>
Week 5	1 April	<p>Sonic Warfare</p> <p>Required Reading: Selected excerpts from: Goodman, S. <i>Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear</i>. London: MIT Press, 2010. Print.</p>

Week 6	8 April	Corporate Warfare Required Reading: Singer, P. W. "Privatized Military History." <i>Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry</i> . Updated ed. London: Cornell UP, 2008. 19-39. Print.
Week 7	15 April	Mnemonic Warfare Required Reading: Garde-Hansen, J. "(Re)Media Events: Remixing War on YouTube." <i>Media and Memory</i> . Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2011. 105-119. Web. Assignment #2 (Essay): Due 2.00pm Thursday 17 April.
Mid Trimester Break: Friday 18 April to Sunday 4 May 2014		
Week 8	6 May	Part 3: Crisis Terror & Colonialism Required Reading: Devadas, V. "Governing Indigenous Sovereignty: Biopolitics and the 'Terror raids' in New Zealand." <i>The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand</i> . Eds. Brendan Hokowhitu and Vijay Devadas. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. 3-24. Print. Screening: 5 May from 12.00pm-2.00pm <i>Operation 8: Deep in the Forest</i> (2011)
Week 9	13 May	Bodies in Crisis Required Reading: Nguyen, M. T. "The Biopower of Beauty: Humanitarian Imperialisms and Global Feminisms in an Age of Terror." <i>Signs</i> 36.2 (2011): 359-383. Web.
Week 10	20 May	Immigration Required Reading: Elder, C. "Invaders, Illegals and Aliens: Imagining Exclusion in a 'White Australia.'" <i>Law Text Culture</i> 7.1 (2003): 221-250. Web.
Week 11	27 May	Torture Required Reading: Butler, J. "Torture and the Ethics of Photography." <i>Observant States: Geopolitics and Visual Culture</i> . Eds. Fraser Macdonald, Rachel Hughes and Klaus Dodds. London: I. B. Tauris: 2010. 41-64. Print.
Week 12	3 June	Apocalypse Required Reading: Selected excerpts from: Calder-Williams, E. <i>Combined and Uneven Apocalypse</i> . Winchester: Zero, 2011. Print. Assignment #3 (Take Home Test): Due 2.00pm Monday 16 June