

MDIA 413 Media, History and Theory

Trimester 1 2014

3 March to 2 July 2014

30 Points

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates:	3 March to 6 June 2014
Easter/Mid-Trimester break:	18 April to 4 May 2014
Last assessment item due:	12 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

Seminars

Tuesday	1.10-3.00pm	Room 103, 81 Fairlie Terrace
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NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Staff	Email	Phone	Room	Office Hours
Dr Minette Hillyer	minette.hillyer@vuw.ac.nz	(04) 463 9746	101, 81FT	Monday 12noon-1.00pm, or by appointment.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course information will be posted on the MDIA 413 Blackboard site, and communicated occasionally via emails from Blackboard to your VUW email address. 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 new media technologies in relation to broader issues of historical, social and aesthetic significance. (The media form selected for study will vary according to the interests of the staff member teaching the course.)

COURSE CONTENT

In 2014 the course will focus on discourses of newness in media historiography. It will draw primarily on discourse produced in relation to comparable key moments of transition in visual culture, each of which has

been characterised in some way as “new”: the “birth” of cinema, early television, and the digital turn. Each of these moments is exemplary of a discourse of newness to the extent that it has been characterised as representing a break with previous technological and social experience. While key examples are drawn from visual culture the discursive significance of these moments is applicable to the wider field of objects and enquiries found in Media Studies, and students are encouraged to pursue their own interests in developing research topics.

The purpose of the course is both to introduce students to the issues at stake in historically informed research, and to interrogate the repeated appearance of the “new” in the theorization of visual and media culture. What is at stake in claiming “newness” for our mediated experiences? What constitutes the “new” in the different visual and historical contexts offered by these case studies? To what use can a discourse of “newness” be put in considering the social and theoretical impact of different media forms and experiences?

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. demonstrate techniques of scholarship and critical analysis appropriate to future postgraduate studies;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the stakes of historically informed research, in particular as this relate to discourses of newness and change;
3. identify and locate research objects in the broad field of Media Studies;
4. read, contextualise and apply theory in Media Studies and related fields in pursuit of independent research; and
5. engage constructively and collegially with their peers.

TEACHING FORMAT

This course will be delivered as a weekly seminar designed to encourage self-directed and peer-to-peer learning, and as such will be taught with the expectation that students will see themselves as a part of a community of learners and researchers. For this to work, it is essential that you come to class prepared, having completed the assigned readings and posted to your blog, and ready to engage constructively and with a sense of inquiry. I welcome student contributions in the form of media and scholarly texts and examples; as noted below, the class schedule is preliminary and subject to change based on developing class interests.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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

- Submit the essays and assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 30 point course is 300 hours over the trimester or 20 hours per teaching week. Of this, approximately 24 hours will be spent in class, 60 hours completing assigned readings, and the remainder in independent reading and research and work on assignments.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Assignment One: Blog. 10 posts of approximately 250 words each / 2,500 words in total.	25%	1,2,3,4,5	Each Monday, 2pm, in weeks 2-11 / 10 March-26 May in teaching weeks.
2	Assignment Two: Short Essay 2,000 words	20%	1,2,3,4	Monday, 14 April (week 7), 10am to Turnitin and in hardcopy to the MDIA Drop Slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace.
3	Assignment Three: Independent Research Project Proposal and Peer Response 1,500 words	15%	1,2,3,4,5	Paper version due Monday 12 May, 2pm to Turnitin and in hardcopy to the MDIA Drop Slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace (with core proposal also posted to your Blog by 2pm), and discussed in class on Tuesday 13 May.
4	Assignment Four: Independent Research Essay 3,000 words	40%	1,2,3,4	Thursday, 12 June 2pm to Turnitin and in hardcopy to the MDIA drop slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace.

Assignment One: Blog

2,500 words, (10x250 word blog posts), 25%

Due Mondays, 2pm, weeks 2-11.

For this assignment you should produce 10 blog entries over the course of the trimester, beginning in week two. This amounts to *one blog entry per week*, from weeks 2-11, of approximately 250 words each. The assignment is designed to encourage your sustained and consistent participation with the course readings and themes, to support your writing practice, and to assist you in developing an independent research project. The blog should serve as a critical journal of your developing research in this course. *Note that for this assignment, you will be marked considering all of your entries, rather than on your selection of the best entries.*

Each blog entry should either:

- Engage with an idea discussed in the weekly readings (assigned), or your own reading and research, relevant to the topic covered that week in class; or,

- Reflect on your own experiences in relation to the debates, theories and ideas covered in class and in your assigned readings, or as they emerge from your independent research sources

From time to time, you will be provided with specific tasks to engage with in your blog entry for the week.

You should aim for your blog to be appealing, as well as potentially useful to other researchers in the field, and may write in a different style than you would typically employ in an academic essay. Nonetheless, please make sure to cite all your sources and ensure that your writing is coherent, accessible, and grammatically correct.

You will be rewarded for:

- Timely, and consistent posting of blog entries
- Blogs that are well-written, and engaging
- Blogs that demonstrate a thoughtful engagement with research and ideas
- Blogs that incorporate relevant personal insight and demonstrate independent research

Minette will review your blogs each week before class and peer feedback will occur throughout the course.

Assignment Two: Short Essay

2,000 words, 20%

Due Monday 14 April (week 7), 10am

For this assignment, you are required to identify a media text, event, technology, or practice which has been in some way considered as 'new', and to write a short essay in which you analyse and historicise both the object and its reception. Your object of analysis may be historical, (ie. occurring or available in the past) or contemporary (ie. occurring or available in the present day); regardless of this, your essay should consider both the conditions of its emergence, or occurrence, and the nature of the response to it. In this sense, you should aim to provide an archaeology of its particular discourse of 'newness.'

The essay should be organised in six sections:

1. **Object** (a description of the text, event, technology, or practice; what it is or was)
2. **Emergence / Use** (a consideration of the historical and social context in which your research object can be situated)
3. **Response** (a description of the responses to your research object, particularly focusing on those characterising your object as 'new'; where they occur or occurred, in what sequence, and what they consist or consisted of)
4. **Newness** (an analysis of the discourse of newness as outlined in section 3, which should consider both the newness apparently offered by your object – eg. of dialogue, or consumption, or representation, or dissemination – and the discursive stakes of characterising it in this way)
5. **Consequences / Legacy** (an analysis of any consequences arising from, or legacy of the research object and its reception)
6. **Works cited / Sources**

These sections do not need to be equal in length. You are welcome to re-name them to best serve the needs of your particular research object, or where appropriate to combine some of them, but your essay should be organised in line with this structure and must cover all of the areas outlined above.

Further information about this assignment will be made available early in the course, in class and on Blackboard. The library research workshop in week 3 of the trimester (18 March) is designed to support this assignment.

Your mark for this assignment will be based on:

- Your ability to identify your media object (text, event, technology, or practice) and conduct research about the relevant discursive responses to it;
- Your ability to structure your essay, and present a coherent argument, including a thesis statement, and introduction and conclusion;
- Your ability to draw on relevant theory and literature in framing your argument;
- The clarity and fluency of your written expression;
- The accuracy of your formatting, citations and bibliographic style.

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 at 83 Fairlie Terrace. You must attach a Turnitin receipt to your hardcopy.

Assignment Three: Independent Research Project Proposal and Peer Response

1,500 words, 15%

Paper version due Monday 12 May, 2pm (with core proposal also posted to your Blog by 2pm), and discussed in class on Tuesday 13 May.

For this assignment, you are required to produce a proposal for the longer Independent Research Essay (Assignment 4) which you will hand in at the end of the course. Your proposal should consist of 3 parts:

1. A proposed title for your essay.
2. A summary, of approximately 400-500 words, describing your core subject and proposed methodology, and framed by a research question. This summary should identify your primary research object (what will you be studying), the question you wish to ask of it, the relationship of your proposed essay to other work in the field, and the method and conceptual framework you intend to follow in pursuit of your research question. ***This part of the proposal should be posted to your Blog by 2pm, Monday 12 May to allow for peer feedback in class the following day, in addition to being handed in in hard copy.***
3. An annotated bibliography of up to 1000 words consisting of no more than 10 entries, of which 4-5 should be annotated. Each annotation should be approximately 200 words long, and should demonstrate how and why the article or book in question will be useful in your own research essay. You should format the bibliography in MLA style, following the guidelines in the SEFTMS handbook. You should look at this as a part of your research process, rather than as necessarily representing your final bibliography for the finished research essay.

Each student will be assigned the role of respondent to another student's work, with the task of reading their proposal summary in advance of the class scheduled for Tuesday, 13 May, and the responsibility of coming to class prepared with questions or constructive comments for the writer to contribute to our discussion of their research project.

This assignment will be discussed further in class.

Your mark for this assignment will be based on:

- Your ability to identify and frame an emerging independent research project, with an identifiable research object;
- Your ability to concisely articulate each of the three elements of the proposal;
- Evidence of developing, independent research in the form of a focused and motivated bibliography;
- The quality of your written expression;
- The accuracy of your formatting, citations and bibliographic style.

Assignment Four: Independent Research Essay

3,000 words, 40%

Due Thursday, 12 June 2pm

This assignment should be on a topic of your own devising, with close reference to the ideas discussed in the course, and should demonstrate sustained, and independent research. You should start formulating this topic early on in the course, using your blog entries to help work through ideas. Your proposed topic should be stated and developed in the Independent Research Essay Proposal (Assignment 3); ***your final topic must be cleared with Minette by no later than the end of week 11 (Friday, 30 May).***

Your mark for this assignment will be based on:

- Your ability to identify, pursue, and articulate an independent research project;
- Evidence of sustained and independent research, drawing on the themes and readings covered in class;
- Your ability to structure your essay, and present a coherent argument, including a thesis statement, and introduction and conclusion;
- Your ability to integrate theory and textual analysis;
- The clarity and fluency of your written expression;
- The accuracy of your formatting, citations and bibliographic style.

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/>

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- You must submit this assignment to Turnitin before handing it in to the MDIA Drop Slot at 83 Fairlie Terrace. 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. 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

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 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 in class time or in 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. 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. Tutors cannot grant extensions. . **No assignment without an extension 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

Readings will be made electronically and on closed reserve.

RECOMMENDED READING

Recommended reading will be available on Blackboard and or on closed reserve.

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. Please note, however, that this is the first trimester in which the course is being taught in its current form.

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. I welcome any feedback from you in person or via email.

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

Please note that this is a preliminary schedule and is subject to change based on student requests or as the need arises. Any changes to this programme will be made in consultation with the class and posted in advance of the relevant class on Blackboard.

Week 1	4 March	Newness
Week 2	11 March	Historicity First Blog entry due Monday, 10 March, 2pm
Week 3	18 March	Library research workshop with Subject Librarian, Koichi Inoue, Murphy 211 <i>Please note change of venue for this week's class only</i>
Week 4	25 March	New technologies
Week 5	1 April	New bodies
Week 6	8 April	Instantaneity / The event
Week 7	15 April	Seeing newness/ New ways of seeing Assignment Two due Monday 14 April, 10am
Mid Trimester Break: Friday 18 April to Sunday 4 May 2014		
Week 8	6 May	Archiving / commemoration
Week 9	13 May	Affect Assignment Three due Monday 12 May, 2pm
Week 10	20 May	Culture
Week 11	27 May	Essay workshops Last Blog entry due Monday, 26 May, 2pm
Week 12	3 June	Essay workshops Assignment Four due Thursday 12 June, 2pm