

MDIA 312 Media, Polity and Economy

Trimester 2 2015

13 July to 15 November 2015

20 Points

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October 2015
Mid-trimester break: 24 August to 6 September 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

Lectures

Monday 2.10pm – 4.00pm 77 Fairlie Terrace FT77 306

Tutorials

Monday 4.10pm – 5.00pm 83 Fairlie Terrace FT83 203

Tutorials begin in Week 2. Since there will be only one tutorial for this course, there is no need to sign up.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator and Lecturer: Peter Thompson
Email: peter.thompson@vuw.ac.nz
Phone: 04 463 6827
Room: 305, 83 Fairlie Terrace
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1.00-2.30pm or by appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All course related information, and any additional information that students may find useful, will be available on the MDIA 312 Blackboard site. Lecture Powerpoints will be uploaded to Blackboard, usually after the lecture. These are an outline only and must **not** be considered an adequate substitute for lecture attendance.

NB: Blackboard messages will default to your VUW student 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

The course examines the interplay between the media, government, and markets from different political economic perspectives. Topics here include government and advertiser influence, tensions between public service and commercial goals, and the impact of digital platforms on media business models. The course also examines the role of media in politics and markets, including questions about the public sphere, democratic participation, political image management and also communication/information processes in the global economy and financial markets. The course encourages students to develop topics of personal interest within the assignment frameworks and includes input from expert practitioners in industry and/or politics.

COURSE CONTENT

The course examines the relations between the media, politics and economics from a dual perspective: The influence of political and economic arrangements on the way different media operate is considered alongside the role of media in the functioning of government and markets. This encompasses a range of issues including; institutional arrangements and practices of contemporary media; the media's role in facilitating or eroding democratic process/participation; media representations of politics and economics; the extent to which the media serve an elite propaganda function or influence government policy; the tensions between commercial and public service media functions; the implications of digital platforms for media economics; the role of the media in the development of the informational economy and financial markets; the global media and imperialism debates. In exploring these themes, the course highlights the different perspectives within political-economy, particularly liberal-pluralism, neo-Marxism, and the Institutionalist approach.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Identify the assumptions underpinning different political-economic paradigms and recognise their presence in academic literature and media discourses
2. Demonstrate critical awareness of how evolving political and economic conditions shape the operations of media institutions
3. Demonstrate critical awareness of how developments in media systems influence the functioning of the polity and economy
4. Analyse contemporary political and economic issues related to the media in New Zealand or other countries using relevant theories and concepts and
5. Critically analyse a media institution using political-economic theory and evidence derived from documentary/archival methods.

TEACHING FORMAT

There will be 12 two hour lectures and 11 one hour tutorials.

Lectures are an essential component of the course and will include guest talks from expert practitioners from industry/government. Tutorials are essential to completing the course successfully as they are an opportunity to develop your understanding, ask questions, and receive information about assignments. All students are expected to read the relevant article from the course reader and at least one other suggested

reading prior to attending each tutorial, and undertake other reasonable preparations for effective participation.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To pass the course, students must submit all written assignments (as per the instructions below) and gain an overall mark of 50% to demonstrate they have met the learning outcomes.

- Students must attend a minimum of 7 tutorials in order to discuss lectures, readings and develop assignment topics (except where the course coordinator approves exceptions for extenuating circumstances).
- Students must attend a minimum of 7 lectures (including all guest lectures in respect to CLO #3) in order to participate in tutorial discussion and to benefit from expert practitioner perspectives on political and economic mediation (except where the course coordinator approves exceptions for extenuating circumstances).

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of these mandatory course requirements because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

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	Short Essay A (Political Economy of Media) 1,000-1,200 words	25%	1 and 2	Friday 7 August, 1.00pm
2	Short Essay B (Media in Polity & Economy) 1,000-1,200 words	25%	1 and 3	Monday 14 September, 1.00pm
3	Researched Essay 2,500-3,000 words	50%	1-5	Monday 12 October, 1.00pm

1. **Short essay A:** 1,000-1,200 words (25%) This relates to Learning Objectives 1 and 2. Select two political-economic perspectives (from Liberal-pluralist, Marxist, Frankfurt School, or Institutionalist). Write a short essay summarising their characteristic features and identify the key points of difference between them. Then illustrate these features and points of difference by applying the theories to an example of media production and/or content form (for example, the prevalence of populist content in prime time television, the ubiquity of advertising, or the exclusive acquisition of rights to sports events by subscription operators).

2. **Short essay B:** 1,000-1,200 words (25%) This relates to Learning Objectives 1 and 3. EITHER: a) Choose one political-economic perspective on the media and use it to analyse the significance of the media for two political or economic phenomena/ institutional arrangements. OR b) Analyse the significance of the media in one political or economic phenomenon/institutional arrangement using two political-economic perspectives on the media and highlighting the differences between them. (For example, parliamentary practices or democratic representation/elections, or the conduct of international relations, the globalisation of the economy, international business competition, the increasing significance of informational goods/intellectual property or the credit crunch/financial crises).
3. **Researched Essay:** 2,500-3,000 words (50%). This relates to Learning Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. EITHER a) Using the documentary/archival research method and secondary sources, analyse the political and economic arrangements underpinning the operation of a media (or media-related) institution or policy/regulatory arrangement; OR b) Using relevant documentary or secondary sources, conduct an analysis of a media-related political or economic case study.

If you choose to analyse a media institution, this should identify ownership, regulatory arrangements, value chain/revenue streams, and norms of practice on an institutional level, and consider how these influence the institution's functions/practices (e.g. the drive for TV advertiser ratings means some genres are rarely scheduled in prime time).

If you choose to analyse a policy arrangement, then you should consider how the policy/regulation affects the production, distribution or reception of media content, the priorities of the regulatory institution (if any) and the mode of intervention (e.g. NZ on Air funds local TV content production but cannot itself broadcast programmes; the BSA oversees the code of standards for broadcasters and responds to complaints after transmission).

The essay should also consider how broader political, economic and ideological factors shape the media institution's operations or the policy/regulatory functions in the context of the wider media ecology (e.g. how might a newspaper respond to the loss of sales and advertising revenue to new media forms, or are the broadcasting standards codes still relevant when so much content is accessed online?)

If you choose a political or economic case study, you should ensure that relevant documentation exists to inform your analysis. This might include government policy papers, political party news releases, company reports, and secondary sources such as news reports. This may include some political and/or economic discussion but a central theme must relate to mediation and communication processes. e.g. You might assess a political party's electoral campaign effectiveness, or you might examine how media coverage shaped a political scandal (such as 'dirty politics' or NZ's military presence in Afghanistan) or how the media play a role in an economic issue (such as the TPPI negotiations or the Auckland real estate bubble).

Marking Criteria:

Assignments will take account of:

- Evidence of relevant theoretical learning and application of concepts/methods.
- Overall rigour of analysis and coherence of argumentation.
- Evidence of original thinking/synthesis and effort in sourcing & analysing relevant material.
- Appropriate application of methods and valid, critical use of documentation /sources.
- Quality of writing including accurate expression and referencing.

- Quality of engagement in lectures and tutorials may be taken into consideration, especially where marks are on a grade boundary.

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 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 your turnitin receipt to your hard copy as well as an assignment cover sheet (found on Blackboard or outside the administration office). Remember to fill in your tutor's name. Please do not use plastic folders.

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 can be accepted after Friday 13 November 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 are made available electronically via Blackboard.

NB: Please see relevant lecture week folders.

RECOMMENDED READING

This is a selected list for indicative purposes:

The Political Economy of Communication journal: <http://www.polecom.org/index.php/polecom/index>

Winseck, D. & Jin, D-Y. (Eds.) (2011). *The political economies of media*. London: Bloomsbury.

- Wasko, J, . Murdock, G. & Sousa, H. (Eds.) (2011). *The handbook of political economy of communications*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hirst, M., Phelan, S, & Rupar, V. (Eds.) (2012). *Scooped- the politics and power of journalism in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland: AUT Media.
- Fitzgerald, S.W. (2012). *Corporations and Cultural Industries- Time Warner, Bertelsmann and News Corporation*. Lanham, MY: Lexington Books.
- Davis, A. (2010) *Political communication and social theory*. London: Routledge.
- Murdock, G. & Golding, P. (2010). (Eds.) *Digital dynamics- engagements and disconnections*. Creskill NJ: Hampton press.
- Mosco, V. (2009) *The political economy of media* (2nd ed). London: Sage.
- McChesney, R. (2008). *The political economy of media- enduring issues, emerging dilemmas*. NY: Monthly Review Press.
- Thussu, D.K. (2006). *International Communication- continuity and change* (2nd ed). London Hodder/Arnold.
- Calabrese, A. & Sparks, C. (2004) (Eds.) *Toward a Political Economy of Culture: capitalism and communication in the twenty-first century*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Golding, P. & Murdock, G. (Eds.) (1997) *The Political Economy of the Media*, Vols. 1 -2. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

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

Previous feedback form MDIA312 has been positive but recent changes include; an expansion of options for Assignment 3; updated readings; the inclusion of more examples of political and economic mediation.

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 1	13 July	Introduction: Media, Polity & Economy Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wasko, J. (2008). The political economy of communications. In A. Hansen (Ed.) <i>Mass communication research methods Vol.2</i>. London: Sage. pp. 4-25.• Babe, R. (1995). On political economy. In R. Babe. <i>Communication and the transformation of economics- essays in information, public policy and political economy</i>. Boulder, Co: Westview Press. pp. 69-85.• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) <i>The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries</i>. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.
Week 2	20 July	Liberal Pluralism: Media markets, public goods, value chains <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meehan, E., & Torre, P.J. (2011). Markets in theory and markets in television. In J. Wasko, G. Murdock & H. Sousa (Eds.) <i>The Handbook of Political Economy of Communications</i>. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell. pp. 62-81.• Wildman, S.S. (2006). Paradigms and analytical frameworks in modern economics and media economics. In A.B. Albaran, S.M. Chan-Olmsted & M.O. Wirth (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Media Management and Economics</i>. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. pp. 66-90.• Cunningham, C. & Flew, T. (2015) Reconsidering Media Economics: From orthodoxies to heterodoxs. <i>Media Industries Journal</i> 2(1):1-18.
Week 3	27 July	Marxist theory: Ownership, accumulation & imperialism <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Berger, A.A. (1995). Marxism and cultural criticism. In A.A. Berger. <i>Cultural criticism- a primer of key concepts</i>. London: Sage. pp. 41-70.• Murdock, G. & Golding, P. (2005). Culture, communications and political economy. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.) <i>Mass Media and Society</i> (4th ed). London: Hodder Arnold.• Winseck, D. (2011). The political economies of media and the transformation of the global media industries. In D. Winseck & D.Y. Jin (Eds.) <i>The political economies of media-the transformation of the global media industries</i>. London: Bloomsbury. pp. 3-81.
Week 4	3 Aug	Frankfurt School: Commodification, colonisation, public sphere <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scannell, P. (2007). Mass culture- Horkheimer, Adorno, Brecht, Benjamin, Germany/USA, 1930s and 1940s. In P. Scannell. <i>Media and Communication</i>. London: Sage. pp. 30-62.• Hope, W. (2012). New Thoughts on the Public Sphere in Aotearoa New Zealand. In M. Hirst, S. Phelan & V. Rupar (Eds.) <i>Scooped- the politics and power of journalism in Aotearoa New Zealand</i>. Auckland: AUT. pp 27-47.

MEDIA STUDIES PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE MDIA 312

- Fuchs, C. (2012). Dallas Smythe Today - The Audience Commodity, the Digital Labour Debate, Marxist Political Economy and Critical Theory. Prolegomena to a Digital Labour Theory of Value. TripleC Cognition, Communication, Co-operation 10(2):692-740.

Week 5 10 Aug

Institutionalist perspective: Media policy and media politics

- Thompson, P.A. (2011). Neoliberalism and the political economies of public television in New Zealand. Australian Journal of Communication (themed issue on the political economy of communication) 38(3).
- Fitzgerald, S. (2012). Corporate Strategy and Structure in an Age of Paranational Hypercapitalism. In S. Fitzgerald. Corporations and Cultural Industries- Time Warner, Bertelsmann and News Corporation. Lanham, MY: Lexington Books.
- Chang, H-J. (2001). Breaking the Mould- An Institutionalist Political Economy Alternative to the Neoliberal Theory of the Market and the State. UNRISD Social Policy and Development Programme Paper Number 6.

Week 6 17 Aug

Media, Politics and Democracy

- Louw, E. (2005). Politics: image versus substance. In E. Louw. The media and political process. London: Sage. pp. 13-35.
- Davis, A. (2010). The production of policy and news- liquid politics and the working cultures of the new capitalism. In A. Davis. Political communication and social theory. London: Routledge. pp.51-66
- Thompson, P.A. (2012). Last chance to see? Public broadcasting policy and the public sphere in New Zealand. In M. Hirst, S. Phelan & V. Rupa (Eds.) Scooped- journalism, politics and power in New Zealand. Auckland: AUT/JMAD.

Mid Trimester Break: Monday 24 August to Sunday 6 September 2015

Week 7 7 Sept

Dirty Politics

- Hager A. (2014). Straight from the Beehive. In N. Hager, *Dirty Politics- How attack politics is poisoning New Zealand's political environment*. Nelson: Craig Potton.
- Hager A. (2006). Repackaging the Leader/The Big Splash at Orewa. In N. Hager. *Hollow Men- a study in the politics of deception*. Nelson: Craig Potton. pp. 71-96.
- Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (2008). Dealing with documentation. In A. Hansen (Ed.) Mass communication research methods Vol.4. London: Sage. pp.281-311.

Week 8 14 Sept

Media, Markets and Globalisation

- Flew, T. (2005). Political economy, new media and the network society. In T. Flew. *New media-an introduction*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press. pp.40-60.

MEDIA STUDIES PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE MDIA 312

- Babe, R. (1995). Communication- Blindspot of Western Economics. In R. Babe. Communication and the Transformation of Economics- essays in information, public policy and political economy. Boulder Co: Westview Press. pp 51-65
- Hope, W. (2010). Time, Communication and financial collapse. International Journal of Communication 4: 649-669.

Week 9 21 Sept Media, Money and Finance

- Thompson, P.A. (2015). Funny in a Rich Man's World: The Contradictory Conceptions of Money in Forex Trading. In G. Murdock & Jostein Gripsrud (Eds) Money Talks- Media, Markets, Crisis. Bristol: Intellect Books. pp.45-64.
- Thompson, P.A. (2014). The Mediation of Financial Information Flows: Traders, Analysts, Journalists. In S. Schifferes & R. Roberts (Eds) The Media and Financial Crises- Historical and Comparative Perspectives. London: Routledge. pp 169-186
- Thompson, P.A. (2013). Invested Interests? Reflexivity, Representation and Reporting in Financial Markets. Journalism.14(2): 208-227.

Week 10 28 Sept Political economy of international media

- Boyd Barrett, O. (2015). Media Imperialism- Chapter 1: Redefining the Field. London: Sage.
- Thussu, D.K. (2006). Approaches to theorising international communication. In D.K. Thussu. International communication- continuity and change (2nd ed). London: Hodder Arnold. pp. 40-63.
- Hope, W. (2011). Global capitalism, temporality and the political economy of communication. In J. Wasko, G. Murdock & H. Sousa (Eds.) The handbook of political economy of communications. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell. pp.523-540.

Week 11 5 Oct *TBC- Note guest lectures depend on availability and timing may require variation in the schedule*

Week 12 12 Oct *TBC- Note guest lectures depend on availability and timing may require variation in the schedule*