ARTS3093: MEDIA POWER
COURSE OUTLINE

SEMESTER 2, 2013

CRICOS Provider no. 00098G
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Schedule: A Week at a Time</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details for Course Convener</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Details</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Aims</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Rationale</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Requirements</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essential Information for Students</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referencing Guidelines</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Submission Requirements</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 1: Short Essay</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 2: Presentation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 3: Presentation Report</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment 4: Research Portfolio</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Tasks: Learning Outcomes &amp; Graduate Attributes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Overview</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Tutorial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>29 July-2 August</td>
<td>Studying Media Power: Introducing Frameworks and Issues</td>
<td>No Tutorials this week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>5-9 August</td>
<td>Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model: Manufacturing Consent?</td>
<td>Studying Media Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>12-16 August</td>
<td>The Global Business of Media Politics: Murdoch and News Corp</td>
<td>Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>19-23 August</td>
<td>Political Economy of Mass Media: Rich Media, Poor Democracy?</td>
<td>The Global Business of Media Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>26-30 August</td>
<td>Conceptualizing Media Power: Media and Symbolic Power</td>
<td>Political Economy of Mass Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>1-6 September</td>
<td>A Changing Media Landscape: Key Contemporary Shifts?</td>
<td>Conceptualizing Media Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>9-13 September</td>
<td>Contemporary Advertising: Monetizing Changing Media Audiences</td>
<td>A Changing Media Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>16-20 September</td>
<td>The Australian Mediascape: Examining Our Media Industry</td>
<td>Contemporary Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Sep-4 Oct</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Teaching Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>14-18 October</td>
<td>The Internet and a Networked World: Reshaping Media Power?</td>
<td>Has the digital revolution caused the demise of traditional journalism?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>21-25 October</td>
<td>The Corporatization of Facebook: Media Power and Social Networks</td>
<td>The Internet and a Networked World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>28 Oct-1 Nov</td>
<td>No Lecture this week.</td>
<td>The Corporatization of Facebook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

This course explores the history and contemporary nature and extent of media power, with a particular focus on media industries and institutions – on media as a business. The media’s influence within social, cultural, economic and political contexts will be examined. We will explore various facets and aspects of media power in relationship to changing techno-social contexts; we will examine how media industries are coming to terms with new media technologies and associated new modes of sociality and communication. Students are asked to develop a critical perspective on issues, together with an understanding of the ways in which contemporary media has come to wield significant power in society and culture.

Course Convener

Collin Chua
Office: Webster, Room 231C
Tel: 9385 5988
Email: c.chua@unsw.edu.au
Consultation time: Wednesdays 10.30-11.30am, and Thursdays 1.30-2.30pm (please email to make an appointment).

Tutoring Staff

Penny Spirou
Email: p.spirou@unsw.edu.au

Course Details

Six Units of Credit, Upper Level 3 Course

Lecture: Thursday 1-3pm (Civil Engineering G1)
Tutorials: Tuesday 10-11am (Red Centre West 3037)
Tuesday 11am-12pm (Red Centre West 3037)
Wednesday 9-10am (Webster 137)
Wednesday 10-11am (Webster 137)

Course Aims

• To explore the history and general theory of media power across a wide range of media forms and processes, institutions and industries, from their involvement in state politics to the micro-politics of everyday life.
• To allow students to understand the structure of media institutions and industries, in relation to particular formations of political and social power.
• To allow students to explore the contemporary state of media power, and the possible futures that media power and its current formations imply.
• To allow students to understand the contemporary and possible future challenges to political and social power posed by contemporary media formations, along with the new modes of access to power they might enable.
Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes

At the end of this course students will have:

1. An in-depth understanding of a range of key debates and issues relating to media power;
2. the ability to critically investigate formations and institutions of media power in relation to wider historical, social, political, economic and cultural processes and contexts;
3. skills in critical analysis and the rigorous application of theoretical concepts to investigate everyday issues and debates relating to media power;
4. an appreciation of the continuing importance of critically engaging with the contemporary state of media power;
5. an ability to think independently, critically and creatively about media power.

Teaching and Learning Rationale

This is a level 3 course. It builds on skills developed in levels 1 and 2 courses. It will allow students to develop skills in higher order analysis and self-directed learning. Both lectures and tutorials will be open to dialogue with the aim of exploring the readings and related questions in a collaborative and rigorous way.

This course is NOT about rote learning, but rather involves actively thinking about and engaging with a number of key issues, developments, concepts, perspectives, and debates. Students are expected to take control of their own learning, rather than passively expect information to be delivered to them.

Teaching Strategies

All students are expected to come each week to both lectures and tutorials well prepared with notes on the readings and any ideas or issues they want to pursue. The readings are intended to be thought provoking and you will need to devote at least 2-3 hrs per week to preparation. If you do not keep up with the readings you will find it very difficult to pass the course. The course is aimed at building productive and lively communities of inquiry in both lectures and tutorials.

The course will have a UNSW Moodle site, where you can find lecture notes and a range of other basic course resources. https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index.php

Course Reader

The Course Reader will be available from the University Bookshop.

YOU WILL NEED TO BRING THE COURSE READER TO LECTURES AND TUTORIALS.
Attendance Requirements

You are required to attend the lectures and tutorials. In accordance with Faculty policy, if you miss more than 2 tutorials, or more than 2 lectures, you will fail the course.

Course Evaluation

Your feedback gathered from the CATEI surveys at the end of the session offers valuable input. Your experiences and suggestions are important, and there is always room for improvement in terms of content and teaching strategies.

Essential Information for Students

A document called ‘Essential Information for SAM students’ is available for download at: https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/.

In this document, you will find important information on the following:

- Essay Writing Support Services
- Policies Regarding Late Work
- Procedure for Applying for Extensions
- Procedure for Applying for Special Consideration
- Procedures for Submitting Assessments
- Policy on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Referencing Guidelines

All written work must demonstrate the use of correct referencing. If you use an incorrect referencing system, your work will be marked down. This course will require you to use the Harvard system: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/onlib/ref.html

Assessment Submission Requirements

All students must submit both printed and electronic copies of their written work.

Submit a hard copy of your assignments to the assignment drop-off box outside the SAM School office, Room 312, Level 3 of the Robert Webster building, with a cover sheet (available from the SAM School office and on Moodle) securely attached and your details clearly marked, by 4pm on the due date.

You are also required to submit an electronic copy to Turnitin, via Moodle. Click on ‘Assignments’ in the course Moodle page, and you will then see where you can submit each piece of assessment.
Assessments

There are four assessment components: in order to pass the course you must seriously attempt and submit or fulfil all of its assessment components.

1. Short Essay (due 4pm, Wednesday 28 August, Week 5.)

Value: 20%
Submission: SAM Essay Boxes, Turnitin
Word length: 1000-1500 words

How useful do you think the Propaganda Model is, in terms of how it provides a means for understanding and studying media power? Why do you think so?

You are required to show a sound understanding of the Propaganda Model. You are expected to engage with the readings and lecture materials to date, and provide a coherent, conceptually rigorous response. Keep in mind that this course and its assessment tasks are based on encouraging critical thinking, and NOT a simple regurgitation of reading material.

Assessment Criteria:

• Proper and fluent written expression.
• Development of a conceptually coherent and thoughtful reflection.
• Productive engagement with relevant issues, perspectives, and conceptual frameworks from course readings and lectures.
• Accurate and properly presented referencing.

2. Tutorial Leadership (starting from the Week 6 Tutorial.)

Value: 15%

You will be assigned into a small group (of three to four people), and allocated a week to lead the tutorial (including class discussion) by addressing that week’s tutorial topic. While the Presentation is a group assessment, and you are expected to work in collaboration, you will be marked individually, based on your contribution. Your group will lead the tutorial for (10 minutes x number of people in the group; e.g., 3 group members, 30 minutes).

Assessment Criteria:

• Ability to engage the attention of your audience
• Ability to effectively identify and explain the main ideas, concepts, and arguments
• Ability to make productive conceptual connections and provide critical discussion, analysis and commentary of your own
• Ability to initiate and supervise a successful class discussion
• Ability to work successfully as part of a team
3. Presentation Report (due the week AFTER your Tutorial Leadership.)

Value: 25%
Word length: approximately 2000 words

Each person will submit a written Report, which is due one week AFTER your Tutorial Leadership. This is NOT a collaborative assessment. You can submit your Report to your tutor in your tutorial. The standard Late Penalty applies for overdue work.

Your Report is to be divided into five sections. Sections 4 and 5 are NOT included in your word count. The sections are as follows:

1. **Literature Review**: In this section, you are expected to write a brief summary of each of the readings for the week, identifying the main ideas and arguments in each article. If you have done additional research, you may include it here.

2. **Critical Reflection**: In this section, you are expected to provide your thoughts about this week’s topic and material. Make productive conceptual connections and provide critical discussion, analysis and commentary of your own. Address any relevant material and/or case studies outside the course readings that you have investigated. *This is the most important section in your Report.*

3. **Research Scope**: In this section, provide a brief indication of any further research possibilities or directions that you may be interested in pursuing relating to your Presentation.

4. **Reference List**: Provide a full listing of any resources that you have directly used in your work. Do not cite resources that are not directly used. You are expected to conform to proper referencing conventions.

5. **Team Evaluation**: Provide a rating for each of your group members from 1-5 for the following categories (with 1 being the worst score and 5 the best).
   - **Professionalism**: Is he/she punctual, reliable, and organised?
   - **Initiative**: Does he/she work independently towards task objectives?
   - **Endeavour**: Does he/she put in time and effort and make a valued contribution?

You can also provide a short write-up about members of your team, team dynamics, and/or your own contribution. You are expected to be objective – your feedback will be kept strictly confidential.

**Assessment Criteria:**

- Writing and presentation: clarity and coherence of expression, grammar, punctuation, sentence construction, layout
- Conceptual skills: ability to identify, explain, discuss, and analyse key ideas, theories, and arguments
- Critical contribution: ability to contribute conceptually, to bring in relevant additional material, and to provide a critical commentary and analysis of your own
- Referencing: adherence to proper referencing conventions
4. Research Portfolio (due 4pm Wednesday, 6 November, Week 14.)

Value: 40%
Submission: SAM Essay Boxes, Turnitin
3 entries; approximately 1000 words per entry

The Research Portfolio is comprised of 3 entries that address 3 course topics of your choice. (You can choose from lecture topics Weeks 5-12. Your Presentation topic is NOT available for selection.) You are expected to draw on the readings and the lecture materials. If you wish, you can use external readings and sources as supplementary material.

You are advised to compile course notes every week from the readings and lectures, and these course notes can then be drawn on and properly written up for your Portfolio entries.

The Portfolio is intended to help you document and work through a range of key issues, ideas, concepts, arguments, case studies, and theoretical tools.

This assessment is NOT about simply providing summaries, and it is NOT about passively regurgitating content. If you wish, you may begin each entry by providing a quick summary of key points and concepts – but the main focus is on how you critically discuss and reflect on the central issues and theories. You are required to make relevant constructive conceptual connections with other weekly topics and materials in your entries.

If you wish, you can use the same format for each weekly entry as is outlined for your Report; or, alternatively, you can choose to write three mini-essays.

Assessment Criteria:
- Ability to show a strong understanding of key issues, concepts, arguments across the course.
- Ability to put relevant ideas/concepts/theories to productive use.
- Evidence of creative thinking and rigorous conceptual work.
- Fluent and coherent written expression.
- Accurate and properly presented referencing.

Assessment Tasks: Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Short Essay</td>
<td>2, 3, 4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Tutorial Leadership</td>
<td>2, 3, 5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Report</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Portfolio</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Refer to page 5 of this Outline for the list of Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes.
WEEKLY TIMETABLE

WEEK 1 LECTURE / Week 2 Tutorial

Studying Media Power: Introducing Frameworks and Issues

Readings


Overview

The lecture will present an overview of the course. Tutorials will begin in Week 2. Read your listed readings AFTER the lecture, and BEFORE the tutorial. A simple but useful set of questions to start with are...

- Why study media power?
- Why is it important and worthwhile to study media power, and the relation between media and power?
- How can we study media power?

WEEK 2 LECTURE / Week 3 Tutorial

Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model: Manufacturing Consent?

Readings


Overview

This week, we are studying the Herman-Chomsky ‘propaganda model’, as an example of a conceptual framework that allows us to look at media power. The Herman-Chomsky ‘propaganda model’ focuses on the interrelation between corporate power and ideology. The PM has been controversial in some quarters, so we will examine its main ideas, while in class we will aim to discuss whether or not it gives us a useful tool for analysing and thinking about media power.

Remember, read your listed readings AFTER the lecture, and BEFORE the tutorial.
**WEEK 3 LECTURE / Week 4 Tutorial**

The Global Business of Media Politics: Murdoch and News Corp

**Readings**


Brock, George, 2012, ‘The Leveson Inquiry: There’s a bargain to be struck over media freedom and regulation’, *Journalism* 13, pp. 519-528

**Overview**

Rupert Murdoch and the media organization he heads, News Corporation, have been a powerful influence on the world stage for a lengthy period of time. Arsenault and Castells argue: “as the head of the world’s third largest media conglomerate, News Corp – arguably the media organization with a truly ‘global’ reach – Murdoch is particularly situated to wield power.”

The News of the World phone hacking scandal caused significant damage to News Corp and Rupert Murdoch, leading to the Leveson Inquiry in the U.K., and the Finkelstein Report here in Australia. This serves as a case study for us to discuss media power in terms of the global business of media politics.

---

**WEEK 4 LECTURE / Week 5 Tutorial**

Political Economy of Mass Media: Rich Media, Poor Democracy?

**Readings**


**Overview**

A ‘political economy of the media’ approach is based on the premise that the media must be studied in relation to their place within the broader economic and social context. Our era has been described as being characterized by a corporate media explosion. Robert McChesney argues that the major beneficiaries of the so-called Information Age are wealthy investors, advertisers, and a handful of enormous media, computer, and telecommunications corporations. This concentrated corporate control, McChesney maintains, is disastrous for participatory democracy. In class, we will discuss McChesney’s diagnosis of ‘rich media, poor democracy’.
WEEK 5 LECTURE / Week 6 Tutorial
Media and Symbolic Power: Conceptualizing Media Power

Readings


Overview

This week is a time to consolidate the ideas, contexts and issues raised over the first few topics of the course, while reflecting more deeply upon the practical implications and impacts of the multifaceted concept of ‘media power’. Start to conceptualize media power, and the relation between media and power, for yourself – how does media power affect you, your family and friends, your community, and the world around us? What are some of the key frameworks and theoretical perspectives needed to effectively conceptualize and analyse media power, and the relation between media and power? What are the key issues and debates you are particularly interested in?

WEEK 6 LECTURE / Week 7 Tutorial
A Changing Media Landscape: Key Contemporary Shifts?

Readings


Overview

In order to have a relevant and up-to-date media studies, we have to take into account and conceptualise an important shift, where the traditional one-to-many model of mass media is no longer necessarily the only or prevalent way we access and/or produce media. The media are an integral part of our everyday lives, and in our contemporary ‘media life’, characterised by diverse and flexible media interfaces, how can we articulate up-to-date ways to think about recent, current and possibly future shifts in media power? Some important questions for both media scholars and for media professionals: What are the key developments and the key shifts in our contemporary media landscape, and what are the key responses and strategies adopted by media industries and regulatory bodies?
**WEEK 7 LECTURE / Week 8 Tutorial**
Contemporary Advertising: Monetizing Changing Media Audiences

Readings


Overview

Most media companies finance their activities (at least partially) by advertising; it is essential to understand advertising as a primary driver for the media industries. It is evident that advertising continues to have a dominant presence in both public and private spaces. How do commercial interests help to direct various aspects of media power? Presently, commercial advertising, a crucial institution in contemporary media, is undergoing massive change. What are the implications of this for the broader media landscape?

**WEEK 8 LECTURE / Week 9 Tutorial**
The Australian Mediascape: Examining Our Media Industry

Readings


Overview

You should already have a solid working understanding of the media here in Australia. The readings this week are intended to give you a refresher in terms of looking at some of the issues and developments in the Australian media. How can we employ conceptual frameworks and tools to conceptualise, critically examine, and discuss media power here in Australia? What are some of the key trends, issues, and debates currently at play in our Australian media landscape?
WEEK 9 LECTURE / Week 10 Tutorial
Digital TV and Its Consequences: A Changing Media Industry

Readings


Overview

Here in Australia, we are seeing the final stages of the transition from analogue TV to digital TV. This is an extremely significant shift with implications that are not always clearly understood, in terms of effects on our media landscape, and in terms of the upheaval of long-established business models of media operations. How are media corporations and advertisers coping with the tremendous shifts made necessary by digital broadcasting? Does digital broadcasting necessarily mean increased consumer choice, and a diffusion of traditional forms of media power?

WEEK 10 LECTURE / Week 11 Tutorial
Has the Digital Revolution Caused the Demise of Traditional Journalism?

Readings


Overview

This week’s reading and film screening address an important development in our contemporary media landscape: the decline of traditional print journalism as a viable business. One strong opinion is that although the collapse of paper newspapers does not necessarily mean the destruction of journalism, it is unlikely that journalism can survive in the absence of a supporting institution.

What are the structural and financial causes of news media’s sudden collapse? Should public citizens be more concerned about how to reinvigorate the vital role of traditional journalism as a crucial component of democracy?
WEEK 11 LECTURE / Week 12 Tutorial
The Internet and a Networked World: Reshaping Media Power?

Readings


Tang, Lijun and Peidong Yang, 2011, ‘Symbolic power and the Internet: The power of a “horse”’, *Media Culture Society* 33, pp. 675-691

Overview

Drawing on Castells’ theory of network society, Nick Couldry and James Curran describe ‘alternative media’ as “media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media power, whatever form those concentrations may take in different locations.” What are our practical prospects for contesting media power? Does new media such as the Internet implicitly provide spaces of activism, democracy, and liberation? How can we move beyond simplistic celebrations of new media and alternative media, to develop a more rigorous conceptualization of how new media technologies such as the Internet have led to a reshaping of media power?

WEEK 12 LECTURE / Week 13 Tutorial
The Corporatization of Facebook: Media Power and Social Networks

Readings

Fuchs, Christian, 2012, ‘The Political Economy of Privacy on Facebook’, *Television New Media* 13, pp. 139-159

van Dijck, José, 2012, ‘Facebook as a Tool for Producing Sociality and Connectivity’, *Television New Media* 13, pp. 160-176

Overview

Facebook, of course, is the familiar social networking service and website that was launched in February 2004. It’s come a long way since then. On February 1, 2012, Facebook filed for an initial public offering (an IPO, or stock market launch, is the first sale of stock by a company to the public; it’s used by companies to raise expansion capital to become publicly traded enterprises.) What’s the business model behind Facebook? Why should and how can we critically analyze the economic structures and the power relations of this hugely successful media platform?