ARTS3093

Media Power

Term Two // 2020

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Dr James Dutton	j.dutton@unsw.edu.au	By appointment		

School Contact Information

School of the Arts and Media

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

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 Learning Outcomes

1. Display an in-depth understanding of a range of key debates and issues relating to media power
2. Demonstrate 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. Show skills in critical analysis and the rigorous application of theoretical concepts to investigate everyday issues and debates relating to media power
4. Display an appreciation of the continuing importance of critically engaging with the contemporary state of media power
5. Demonstrate an ability to think independently, critically and creatively about media power

Teaching Strategies

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.

Assessment

Students are required to show active learning strategies in approaching the criteria of the assessment. To support learners in this independent critical process, resources will be made available on Moodle for students to explore. These resources will canvas the correct use of the Harvard Referencing system; how to write effective and critically nuanced essays; strategies for making five minute presentations; and forums for discussing key questions regarding the subject/assessments. In the lead up to assessments, significant tutorial time will be spent on developing critically informed essays.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Short Essay	20%	26/06/2020 11:50 PM	2,3,4
Public Communication	30%	Not Applicable	2,3,4,5
Research Essay	50%	07/08/2020 11:50 PM	1,2,3,4,5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Short Essay

Start date:

Details:

1,000 to 1,200 words.

This is the first assignment. Feedback will be provided via LMS.

Additional details:

Essay: It may not be farfetched to remark that today, the media is the key driver for the economy, society, culture, politics. Critically discuss **ONE** political economy of the media approach to studying media, and how it enables a stronger understanding of contemporary socio-economic power structures. For further information on this first assessment and the various political economy of the media approaches, please refer to Moodle.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Public Communication

Start date: Not Applicable

Details:

This is an individual assessment. You will be tasked to deliver an insightful, engaging, and clearly argued talk, relating to a particular topic and of an 8-minute duration, during tutorial time as allocated by your tutor. Feedback will be provided via LMS.

Additional details:

Please see Moodle for further information on this assessment.

Assessment 3: Research Essay

Start date: Not Applicable

Details:

2,000 to 2,500 words. This is the final assignment. Make productive use of the materials and topics from the course as a whole, to creatively reflect upon and analyse SPECIFIC examples/elements of contemporary media power. As part of this assignment, you are required to design an effective and viable research topic/question. You will have the opportunity to seek feedback on your topic/question in the tutorials before submission. Feedback on your Research Essay will be provided via LMS.

Additional details:

Please see Moodle for further information on this assessment.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 0: 25 May - 29 May	Topic	The global business of media power In which we are introduced to the key conceptual approaches of the course, and begin to explore the ways contemporary media (re)produce socio-economic power structures.
	Group Activity	In tutorials we will schedule your presentation for Assessment Two.
Week 2: 8 June - 12 June	Topic	The Propaganda Model as a political economy approach to studying media A critical exploration of how Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's influential work on mass media can be considered in the context of networked, digital infrastructures. Are networked media 'manufacturing consent' in the context of web 2.0?
Week 3: 15 June - 19 June	Topic	Political economies of the media: from liberal neoclassical models to Marxian critique This week we canvas key theoretical foundations to studying power dynamics in media by looking at the material relations, market forces, labour systems and competitive business structures that drive our everyday technosocial world. How do different perspectives on economic forces percieve the circulation of capital, information, and work?
Week 4: 22 June - 26 June	Topic	Television, post-TV, and disruptive innovation in the media landscape In the context of web 2.0, dynamic modes of business competition and innovation have emerged. This week we discuss how the medium of television is being restructured in a shape-shifting socio-economic environment. The work of economist Joseph Schumpeter provides insight into how platforms and techno-social practices are continually adapted.
	Assessment	ASSESSMENT ONE: Due Friday 26th June, 11:50pm

Week 5: 29 June - 3 July	Reading	READING WEEK (no classes)
Week 6: 6 July - 10 July	Topic	A digital economy and the new media landscape This week we explore platform capitalism in the context of a data-centric economy. How have cycles of distribution, consumption and production evolved to shape normalised forms of power in the digital media landscape? What are the ways that networked connectivity is monetised? We will discuss how the industry of journalism has responded to these socio-economic forces.
Week 7: 13 July - 17 July	Topic	The audience commodity and algorithmic culture Here we focus on the ways the attention economy works for businesses that are integrally tied to advertising imperatives. Platforms seek means of capturing and sustaining audience engagement, employing algorithms to organise user responses in relation to financially lucrative cultural products. According to theorist Dallas Smythe, the audience becomes a product in this exchange, whereby the time and work of the viewer is cultivated for the financial gain of companies.
Week 8: 20 July - 24 July		Immaterial labour and communicative capitalism Autonomous Marxist theories on labour form the conceptual frameworks for this week's exploration of user-created data. Immaterial labour (also known as free labour or digital labour) proposes that networkers are labouring for the benefit of corporations when user generated content fuels data-centric business models. Debates around exploitation of users arise when capital is produced through networkers' freely given mediated exchanges.
Week 9: 27 July - 31 July		Advertising and marketing in a contemporary media landscape 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?
Week 10: 3 August - 7 August		Self-branding, reputational capital, and subjectivation The post-Fordist era is characterized by

| | | destabilised employment and the rise of casualised and contract-based work. In this competitve and precarious workforce, discourses on the entrepreneurial pursuits of individuals are prized. How do networked infrastructures (re)produce the commodification and performativity of identity and self in an age marked by relentless connectivity? What are the pressures, demands, desires, and anxieties that have resulted, from this requirement to sell ourselves? |
| | Assessment | ASSESSMENT THREE: Due Friday 7th August, 11:50pm |

Resources

Prescribed Resources

All resources will be made available via Moodle.

Recommended Resources

Bonus research support material will be made available via Moodle.

Course Evaluation and Development

Regular student feedback is encouraged via a feedback forum on Moodle, and the teaching team will regularly discuss how students are experiencing the subject as the trimester unfolds.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.
http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

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Austin @austinthepapillon. Photographed on Sep 2019.

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.