

MACS390: Media, war and peace

SUBJECT OUTLINE

Autumn session 2009

8 credit points, prerequisite 24 credit points at 200 level

Media and Cultural Studies (MACS), School of Social Sciences, Media and Communication,
Faculty of Arts

University of Wollongong



Subject coordinator

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Sometimes you can find me in my office. You are also welcome to contact me by phone (at work any time; at home after 7am and before 9pm, please), fax or email, to discuss any issue or make an appointment.

Official office hours: Mondays 20.30-22.30;
Wednesdays 18.30-20.30

Assessment Summary

	Assessment	Format	Length	Due Date	Weighting
1	Attendance			Weeks 2-13	<i>See Notes</i>
2	Participation	Weekly oral reports plus participation	30-60 seconds	Weeks 2-13	10%
3	Short	Presentation	10 minutes maximum	Allocated in class	10%
4	Exchange	Presentation in the form of a verbal exchange	<i>See notes</i>	Allocated in class	10%
5	Class activity	Class time organised by student group	<i>See notes</i>	Allocated in class	20%
6	Project plan	Summary	100 words	Week 11	10%
7	Project report	Information pack and dialogue	2500 words or equivalent	2.00pm Wednesday 10 June	40%

Class Contact Details

Class times and locations are available from the University's website. Please note that class times on the timetable are provisional.

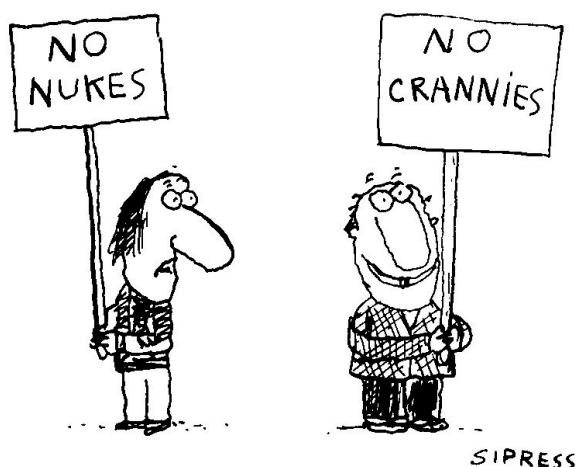
If possible, enrol via SOLS before week 2, when classes begin.

If you have timetabling difficulties, see Brian.

Subject description

MACS390 includes material relating media to war and peace, in the wide sense including violence and nonviolence. It includes news coverage — or lack of news coverage — of wars, peace initiatives, interpersonal violence and peaceful living. It also includes war, peace, violence and nonviolence in the media outside the news, such as advertisements, dramas, comedies and music. It includes mass media and alternative media. It includes the social forces that shape the form and content of the media. And much else.

We can look at this content from various angles, called theories or perspectives. We will cover five theories in weeks 2 to 6. The goal in covering both content and theory is to understand theory by applying it to case studies and to see media/war/peace through new perspectives.



Job skills

According to employers, the most important attributes for success are

- motivation, self-discipline and self-understanding
- ability to get along with others and work in teams
- communication skills: verbal, written and using communication technologies
- skills in critical thinking.

Knowledge — the factual material that you learn in classes — is less important. In MACS390 there is emphasis on self-directed learning and on working in teams, as well as communication skills and critical thinking. But don't rely on your university education to give you everything you need for job success. Most university courses are built around individual work, not teamwork, and impose external incentives (marks) that often do not help to build internal motivation.

Advice to you from last year's students

From class 1

- Attend classes and actively participate.
- Have an open mind.
- Practise speaking/presentation skills.
- Prepare for class.
- Pay attention to feedback and embrace group work.

From class 2

- 1-minute reports: it's very important to be prepared and keep to a minute.
- Class activity: use props and dress-ups but don't plan too many activities.
- Shorts: learn how to do Powerpoint; use contemporary issues
- Overall: relax, have fun, enjoy and be open-minded.

From class 3

- Creativity: innovation, interactivity and creativity = success! Interesting media items and reports are helpful.
- Preparation: prepare thoroughly; preferably don't use notes; practice helps.
- Overall: an open mind + relaxed state + fun = valuable learning.

From class 4

- Get involved and be prepared.
- Don't be afraid to get amongst it.
- Don't be scared of your opinions.
- Be open minded.
- Assignments: start the major project early — it takes longer than expected; use Brian as a resource — take up his offer on help.
- Presentations: don't read from notes; do them early in the session; be creative.

From class 5

- Learn some interesting, effective teaching methods for your class activity.
- Be prepared for class; get involved and participate.
- Think outside the square and have an open mind.
- Make yummy snacks — you'll be popular.
- Don't underestimate the criteria for tasks.

How the advice was collected

In week 13 of last year's class, I circulated a one-page feedback sheet. One of the items was "What is your most important advice to students in future classes?" Individuals put their responses in boxes. A group of students in the class collected the responses and summarised them. Their summaries are given above.

Brian

Learning outcomes; graduate qualities

MACS390 will expose you to a wide range of information about peace and war in the local and global media environment (informed). Through all of the assessment tasks, you will have to find materials for yourself and to connect theory and case studies in original ways (independent learners). Through designing presentations, activities for the class and response packs for organisations, you will have to solve problems in communicating about peace and war (problem solvers). Through the one-minute reports and shorts you'll develop skills in verbal communication; through the project you'll develop skills in written communication (effective communicators). By addressing issues of war, peace, violence and nonviolence that are vital to individuals and the world community, you will develop a greater appreciation of your role in society and how you can act responsibly (responsible).

Informed

Have a sound knowledge of an area of a disciplinary study or interdisciplinary area of study offered by the Faculty of Arts through its majors with an understanding of its current issues, their contexts and developments over time.

Independent Learners

Engage with new ideas and ways of thinking, enquiry and critical analysis of issues and research through a sequence of subjects that culminates in the ability to reflect broadly on their field of study. Acknowledge the work and ideas of others.

Problem Solvers

Take on challenges and apply the relevant skills required to respond effectively to the central issues raised. Be flexible, thorough and innovative and aim for high standards.

Effective Communicators

Articulate ideas and convey them effectively using a variety of modes. Engage collaboratively with people in different settings. Recognise how culture can shape communication.

Responsible

Understand how decisions can affect others, and make ethically informed choices. Appreciate and respect diversity. Act with integrity as part of local, national, regional, global and professional communities.

The Faculty Graduate Qualities can be found on the following website:

<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/current/FacultyGraduateQualities/index.html>

Special features of MACS390

MACS390 is run a bit differently from most other subjects. Please read the subject outline carefully rather than assuming things are like other classes.

- The penalty for less than 80% attendance is unusual. Please check it.

- You have a lot of choice in picking your assessment topics.

- Be prepared for a few unusual teaching methods. And be prepared to have some fun!

There are no lectures. Educational research shows that lectures are no better than other learning modes, such as reading, for learning information, and worse for deeper forms of understanding. In MACS390, the aim is to encourage you to learn to learn for yourself, both by finding and analysing sources, by working in groups and by helping others to learn.

A lot of class time is interactive, including activities designed by groups of students — including you! As is commonly said, the best way to learn something is to teach it.

However, if you feel that because you are not taking notes on lectures, you are not learning much, please read the following comments.

Learning and taking notes

Different people learn in different ways. Here are some suggestions for maximising your learning by taking notes.

In educational research, there is common distinction between “surface learning” and “deep learning.” Surface learning is when you learn something at a relatively superficial level. For example, you might memorise a text, but not understand all that much about what it means. Multiple choice questions usually test surface learning.

“Deep learning” is when you have a more comprehensive grasp of something, integrated into your own systems of understanding. With deep learning, you can readily deploy your understanding in new situations. Designing your own response to a complex task can demonstrate deep learning.

With surface learning of the backfire model (covered in week 3), you can list the five methods of inhibiting outrage. With deep learning, you can — for example — detect the methods in a new situation, and perhaps notice how the methods vary from situation to situation. And you might notice weaknesses in the backfire framework.

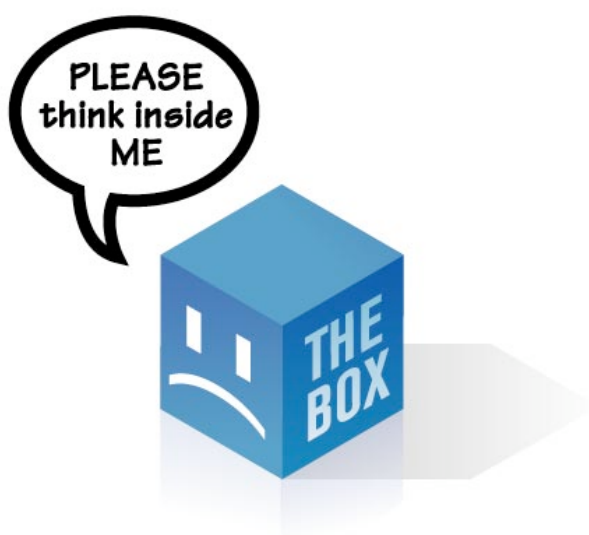
Let's say you're reading something, an article or a book. If you simply read what the author says, perhaps agreeing or disagreeing and picking up key

points, you are coasting along on the surface. Still, that's far better than not reading at all!

For deep learning, you need to process the material, namely transform it using your own thinking. Putting what you read into your own words is a useful initial step. Instead of writing out the five methods of inhibition as listed in the text, you can express them in a different way. You can force yourself to do this by putting them into a different mode of expression, for example rap lyrics or a set of diagrams.

Another approach is to explain the ideas to others, in terms specifically suited to them. This forces you to process the ideas, promoting deep learning. This is basis for the common saying that the best way to learn something is to teach it. This works even when your "pupil" knows nothing whatever about the topic.

For really deep learning, you need to grapple with the concepts themselves, as well as with ways to express them. To do this, you need to come at them with your own ways of thinking and with your own agenda.



One of the best ways to do this is to have one or more burning questions that you want to answer, or goals that you'd like to achieve. When you approach a new text, you look at it from the point of view of your questions or goals.

Let's say that your burning question is, "What methods of communication really have an influence?" When you look at the backfire model, you notice that communication to receptive audiences is an essential condition for backfire occurring, but that doesn't tell you what methods of communication have an influence. (There's a limitation of the backfire model already.) You notice that cover-up is a key method of inhibiting outrage, so if a method of communication is going to have an influence, it needs to overcome cover-up. If you already know why some methods of communication have more influence, you can patch

that into the backfire model, making it more comprehensive. And so on.

Let's say your personal goals are to become a top executive and make lots of money. When you look at the backfire model, the first thing you notice is that if you do something that backfires, that's bad for you! So in climbing the career ladder, you need to make sure to avoid backfires. Maybe you can advise the boss on tactics and get some brownie points. Or if you're more devious, you can let the boss walk into a disastrous backfire, so you can step in afterwards and fix things up. You notice that the backfire model is oriented to those with less power. So you look at things from the other side. But you're not cynical — you want to get ahead legitimately. So you look for ways to prevent backfire by doing the right thing as a boss.

Let's say your personal goal is to help poor people — the ones who never had a chance due to upbringing, lack of skills and lack of opportunity. The first thing you notice about the backfire model is that it has mainly been used to analyse sudden injustices, such as a police beating or an invasion. But poverty is a slow-motion injustice. There's not much to bring it to people's attention as a source of outrage. So you think about ways to make the injustice of poverty more dramatic. In a sense, it's covered up by being routine, below the media horizon. And then there's the problem that poor people are devalued. How can that be changed? The backfire model says devaluation needs to be challenged, but doesn't give much guidance on how.

In each of these cases, you use your own questions and goals to probe the ideas. You are searching for answers and hints. In the course of your search, you learn a tremendous amount about the ideas, especially their strengths and weaknesses for serving your purpose.

Perhaps you don't have any burning questions or ambitious goals. Well, just pick one out and use it as if it's your personal question. That's right! Just pretend. For learning purposes, it's nearly as good as having an authentic question. Furthermore, if you keep pretending this way, in a matter of months the question may very well become authentic for you. So pick something worthwhile — like helping poor people! Research shows that helping others is highly satisfying.

Back to deep learning: how can you foster your own deep learning as you listen to lectures, read articles, serve customers or talk with your friends? One of the very best ways is taking notes or, more simply, writing.

Writing is not just a way of putting down what you're thinking: it's actually a process of thinking itself. Writing is especially good for clarifying ideas.

So a good way to pursue your questions and goals is to write.

If you've just read an article, you can take notes. It's convenient to start with a one or two sentence summary of the key point of the article. Then tell about how the ideas in the article relate to your personal questions and goals. Note down particular points from the article that are relevant to your interests. If the article seems totally irrelevant, then explain what's missing and how it could be improved — from your point of view, of course.

You can also take notes while listening to someone talk. You can take notes after watching a film. And after you've observed a stressful situation at work, you can write about it, trying to understand what happened and why people reacted the way they did. This is also an excellent way to deal with your own emotions.

If you start taking notes like this, before long you will have an excellent collection, all oriented to your own personal interests. Of course, your interests might change, but that's not a drama. The main thing is that you are developing your capacity for deep learning, by doing it. You can then use that capacity in different circumstances.

Happy note taking!

Further reading

Louise DeSalvo, *Writing as a way of healing: how telling our stories transforms our lives* (London: Women's Press, 1999): the case for writing to promote emotional healing.

Michael J. A. Howe, *Genius explained* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999): the case that genius is founded on hard work, not innate ability.

Terry Orlick, *In pursuit of excellence: how to win in sport and life through mental training* (Champaign, IL: Leisure Press, 1990): psychology for peak athletic performance, with spin-offs for other life challenges.

Paul Ramsden, *Learning to teach in higher education* (London: Routledge, 1992): an approach to teaching based on fostering deep learning by students.

Robert Restak, *Mozart's brain and the fighter pilot: unleashing your brain's potential* (New York: Harmony Books, 2001): research showing that the brain is highly plastic throughout life, and can be transformed through practice.

John Whitmore, *Coaching for performance* (London: Nicholas Brealey, 1996): how to bring out the best in people, in sports, business and elsewhere.

How to become a great writer

For the past year I've been studying research on writing, namely what it takes to become a highly productive writer. It's not natural talent. The evidence suggests that writers are made, not born. So what do you have to do to be a writer?

The two keys are regular practice and periodic feedback. Regular practice means most days, every day if possible. No one expects a weekend athlete, who trains for 12 hours — once a week, every Saturday — to be able to win a championship. Serious athletes train six or seven days a week, with a carefully planned programme designed to build the capacity for performance and for the training itself.



ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY RUSSO

Robert Boice studied the writing performance of new academics and observed that the most productive new academics worked in brief regular sessions. They avoided long, exhausting writing sessions. In other words, they avoided binge writing. Yet most academics — and most students — are binge writers. They wait until they have a big block of time, or until a deadline looms, and then work for many hours until the task is done. This *seems* to work, but Boice's evidence is that it's not very effective.

In one of Boice's experiments, academics who used their regular writing approach — bingeing — wrote 17 pages of completed prose per year, about half an article. Those who followed his guidelines to write in brief regular sessions produced 64 pages per year. Those who used brief regular sessions and reported on their output regularly to Boice produced 157 pages per year.

What this shows is that by changing your writing habits, you can become vastly more productive. The brain can be trained just like a muscle. The right sort of training can make it far stronger.

Tara Gray developed a programme for high academic productivity based on 12 steps. (This is analogous to the 12-step programmes for Alcoholics Anonymous and other such groups; this one is designed to break an addiction to binge writing.) The first step is to schedule 30 minutes daily for writing.

Your scheduled time should be inviolate, like the time for your favourite television programme or for an exam: the only excuse for missing your writing time should be serious illness or emergency.

At your scheduled time, sit down to write without any books or articles open, just some notes about your topic. This is time for writing *new words*, not for reading or checking sources. Check the time (e.g. 8.47am) and write it down. Now start writing on your day's topic, for 15 to 30 minutes. When finished, check the time and write down the total time spent writing (e.g. 22 minutes) and the number of words you've written (e.g. 327 words). Every week, report your daily writing minutes and words to someone who will hold you accountable.

That's the foundation of Gray's writing programme. If you follow it, you'll find yourself being much more productive. Why does it work? Because writing is a form of thinking. When you write daily, your mind is unconsciously processing the material through the rest of the day, so you're better prepared the next day. This is just like the way your muscles rebuild after exercise, making you stronger for the next day's training — as long as you don't do too much. If you write too much in one session, you're likely to feel worn out and less enthusiastic the next day.

What do you write about? Write on any assignment long before it's due. As Gray says, write before you're ready. Write what you know about the topic, write about how you plan to cover the topic, write about things you need to know — anything to get you going.

Why does it save time to write before you're ready? Because you find out what you need to know. If you do lots of reading before you write, you end up reading lots of stuff that isn't relevant. If, instead, you write first, then you know what information you need for your argument, and you're much more efficient in finding it and reading it. Writing regularly ends up saving you time.

And you'll be more creative. Boice in another experiment found that daily writers produced five times as many new ideas per week as academics who were not writing but who were instructed to note down new ideas when they thought of them.

Experienced, highly productive writers don't wait to be inspired to write — instead, they write to be inspired.

Changing your writing habits is not easy. After all, you've probably been binge writing for years, and breaking an addiction can be hard. Plus your friends won't understand when you say that you can't meet them because it's your writing time. So if you're serious about this, try to get together in a group of two, three or four who are committed to the same goal, and meet weekly to compare notes on what it

takes to develop a new habit. Instead of doing assignments at the last minute, you'll be starting them weeks in advance, doing a little bit each day.

It can take three or four months of practice to adjust from bingeing to brief regular sessions. But the effort will be worthwhile, because it can make the difference between being an ordinary writer and being an outstanding writer. Remember, you have the same basic mental capacity as anyone else and — if you want — you can become highly productive. The key to high performance is deliberate practice, over a long period.

Further reading

Robert Boice, *Professors as writers: a self-help guide to productive writing* (Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1990).

Robert Boice, *Advice for new faculty members: nihil nimus* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000).

Tara Gray, *Publish & flourish: become a prolific scholar* (Teaching Academy, New Mexico State University, 2005).

Paul J. Silvia, *How to write a lot: a practical guide to productive academic writing* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2007).



Subject schedule

Week	Week beginning	
1	2 March	no class
2	9 March	class
3	16 March	class
4	23 March	class
5	30 March	class
6	6 April	class
	13 April	mid session recess
7	20 April	class
8	27 April	class
9	4 May	class
10	11 May	class
11	18 May	class
12	25 May	class
13	1 June	class
14	8 June	study recess
15	15 June	exam period

What happens in class

- Introductions and/or sharing (weeks 2-13)
- Weekly 1-minute reports (weeks 2-13)
- Exercises on theories (weeks 2-6, if time is available)
- Shorts (weeks 4-7)
- Exchanges (weeks 8-10)
- Class activities (weeks 5-11)
- Preparation for the project (weeks 9-13)

Theories covered in class

• Week 1. No class.

Prepare for your one-minute report in week 2.

• Week 2. Conspiracy theories

Bring to class an article about a conspiracy theory or about conspiracy theories generally and be ready to talk about it for 30-60 seconds.



"We're looking for someone who can lie convincingly. The hard part is knowing when we've found him!"

• Week 3. Nonviolent action

There's a large amount of writing about nonviolent action. Some entry points:

- Mohandas Gandhi and his interpreters (Joan Bondurant, Richard Gregg, Krishnalal Shridharani)
- Gene Sharp. See especially his classification of methods of nonviolent action and his framework called the dynamics of nonviolent action. Publications are available at www.aeinstein.org/. A copy of Sharp's monumental *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (in three parts) is in the Short Loans Collection.
- International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (www.nonviolent-conflict.org/), with copies of many articles.
- Kurt Schock, "Nonviolent action and its misconceptions" (available online).
- Brian Martin and Wendy Varney, "Nonviolence and communication," www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/03jpr.html

• Week 4. Backfire

Some attacks backfire against the attackers. Articles about this theory are available at www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/backfire.html. A copy of the book *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire* is in the Short Loans Collection.

• Week 5. Deciphering violence

Karen Cerulo has analysed standard ways that violence is described in stories. Her book is in the Short Loans Collection: Karen A. Cerulo, *Deciphering Violence: The Cognitive Structure of Right and Wrong* (New York: Routledge, 1998). A key extract from this book is an e-reading. Bring to class a newspaper or magazine with news stories about wars, murders or other violent events.

• Week 6. Lying

A relevant article is at www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/03sa.html

The following books are in the Short Loans Collection. Others are in the regular collection. Barnes, J. A., 1994. *A Pack of Lies: Towards a Sociology of Lying*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 177.3/4

Ekman, Paul, 1985. *Telling Lies: Clues to Deceit in the Marketplace, Politics, and Marriage*. New York: Norton. 153.6/24

Ford, Charles V., 1996. *Lies! Lies!! Lies!!! The Psychology of Deceit*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press. 153.83/32

Robinson, W. Peter, 1996. *Deceit, Delusion and Detection*. London: Sage. 177.3/5

Weaver, Paul H., 1994. *News and the Culture of Lying*. New York: Free Press. 071.3/26

Concepts and theories

Peace/war/violence/nonviolence

You can pick any of these for the short, the exchange, the class activity and the project report. For other possibilities, check with Brian.

aggression
assassination
backfire (see week 4)
centre of gravity (in Clausewitz's framework)
conflict resolution
conspiracy theories (see week 2)
culture jamming
disarmament
enlightenment (in Buddhism)
forgiveness
genocide
just war theory
mediation
militarism
military-industrial complex
nonviolent action (see week 3)
pacifism
peacebuilding
peace conversion
peacekeeping
positive peace
protest music
realism (in international relations)
reconciliation
riots
satyagraha (Gandhian nonviolence)
social defence
social justice
terrorism
torture



Communication and media theories and concepts

You can pick any of these for the exchange and as supplementary options for the project report. For other possibilities, check with Brian.

active audience
agenda-setting theory
deciphering violence (see week 5)
discourse
genre
grammar of war discourse (see e-readings by Annabelle Lukin)
lying (see week 6)
media effects theory
medium theory
narrative
organisational theory
political economy
propaganda
representation
semiotics
signal transmission theory (also called message transmission theory)

Requirements and assessment tasks

Subject Requirements

- You are not required to pass every component of assessment to pass the subject.
- Extensions for written work can be granted only when applications for special consideration are made through SOLS.
- Penalty for late submission of work: 10 marks per day out of 100.
- The subject coordinator reserves the right to hold an additional oral examination for any piece of assessment.

Attendance

Attendance is required. If your attendance is less than 80%, a corresponding percentage will be subtracted from your overall mark. For example, with 72% attendance, $80\% - 72\% = 8\%$ will be subtracted. So don't miss more than two classes — and keep track!

Classes are omitted from the calculation when a special consideration request is made through SOLS justifying absence on medical or compassionate grounds. If you are present for only part of a class, that counts as fractional attendance.

If you can't attend your usual class, you are welcome to attend one of the other classes during the week instead. To make up for missed classes, you can attend more than one class in a week during weeks 5 to 12.

Why is attendance so important? Because MACS390 classes are interactive. Part of your learning is from other students, and other students learn from you.

Participation

Due date Weeks 2-13

Weighting 10%

Length 30-60 seconds each week

Each week, you are expected to read a substantial article (more than 1000 words) on the week's topic — or the equivalent in another medium — and give a verbal report on it to the class lasting 30 to 60 seconds. Describe the article, tell what it says and explain its significance.

The topic for week 2 is conspiracy theories. Topics for later weeks will be decided in your class.

Suggestions from last year's class Some favourite topics were — in order of preference — protest music, culture jamming, riots, counterculture, serial killers and honour killing.

The most important skill for you to learn and practise is to speak to the others in the class without reading. Jot down a few notes to remind you about key points, or go entirely from memory. If you get nervous, practise by yourself one or more times. One minute goes by very quickly!

You will be marked only on whether you give a report, *not* on how well you do it. So go ahead and experiment with different forms of delivery: for example, be dramatic, or draw everyone in by starting with intriguing details.

This is a great opportunity to practise becoming a better speaker. This is a very useful skill.

Your participation mark starts at 10 out of 10. You lose one mark for every week you do not give a one-minute report or participate in the class. You can

make up for missed classes by attending more than one class in a week, in weeks 5 to 12.

Short

Due date Shorts are given in class in weeks 4 to 7. The week for your short will be decided in class.

Weighting 10%

Length 5 to 10 minutes

A short is a brief presentation relating a media item to a theory or concept. Choose a media item and tell how it relates to a theory or concept related to peace/war/violence/nonviolence (see examples under "Concepts and theories").

Your media item is a newspaper or magazine article, video clip, email message, webpage, photo, etc. Tell a little bit about the item, for example who created it, where it's available, how you found it and what its significance is. You're welcome to supplement the media item with others.

You should also discuss at least two sources, such as books or scholarly articles, about the theory/concept. Tell what these sources say as well as giving the full references.

Short reports must be spoken from memory or dot-point notes. Do not read from text. When you put text on the screen, let the audience read it — in silence.

If you get really nervous speaking without reading, then write down what you plan to say on your slides (not more than 100 words per slide, please), and let the audience read them.

Timing: The maximum time for an individual short is 10 minutes. You may be cut off at that time. Practise beforehand: you'll find 10 minutes is quite short!

If you wish, you can do your short jointly with one other person. Maximum time for two-person shorts: 14 minutes.

There will be a computer in the room. If you're using a slide show, bring it to class on a flash drive or CD and arrive early so it can be put on the computer. (Sending it to yourself on email is not convenient.) If you're using YouTube or some other Internet source, bring the address on your flash drive or know exactly how to get to it quickly. Embedded web links in slide shows may or may not work, so don't rely on them — have a back-up method. Your help in this will make the classes go much more smoothly.

Checklist

- ☐ I've displayed, distributed and/or described a specific media item.
- ☐ I've discussed two sources about the theory/concept.
- ☐ I'm prepared to talk to the class. I won't read text from my notes or my slides.
- ☐ I've organised my material to finish in less than 10 minutes.
- ☐ I've arranged to arrive early or on time with a flash drive and web links that I need.

Shorts will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- Selection and understanding of the media item
- Understanding of theory/concept
- Application of theory/concept to the media item
- Organisation and expression.

Exchange

Due date Exchanges are given in class in weeks 8 to 10. The week for your exchange will be decided in class.

Weighting 10%

Length 14 minutes maximum for a two-person exchange

An exchange is a conversation or other verbal interaction, normally between two students, that serves as a presentation to the class. It should involve a media item, explaining how it relates to a theory or concept related to peace/war/violence/nonviolence and/or a communications and media theory/concept.

Essentially, you are acting the parts in a small drama as a way of explaining ideas to the audience.

Example 1. Two friends are watching the news on television. They get into a friendly discussion about a news item (involving war etc.), trying to impress each other with their knowledge of relevant theories.

Example 2. A journalist is interviewing a politician. They get into a debate about a war/peace policy matter, each referring to media items and theories to bolster their arguments.

Example 3. Two acquaintances are chatting online about a YouTube video they each admire. They start dissecting the video, referring to online sources about relevant concepts.

In the course of the exchange, you should discuss several sources, such as books or scholarly articles, about the theories/concepts. Tell what these sources say as well as giving the full references.

You are welcome to use aids such as handouts, slides and videos. Try to make these appear in a way that would be natural in an actual exchange in which participants have ready access to information. Alternatively, you can use slides or other aids as an information backdrop to ideas raised in the exchange.

You can present the exchange individually, as a pair or as a threesome.

- Individual: 10 minutes maximum. You have to play at least two parts. You need to discuss at least 3 sources.
- Pair: 14 minutes maximum. The two of you need to discuss at least 3 sources.
- Threesome: 17 minutes maximum. You need to discuss at least 4 sources.

Exchanges will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- Selection and understanding of the media item
- Understanding of theories/concepts
- Application of theories/concepts to the media item
- Quality of presentation

Class activity

Due date Class activities are given in class in weeks 5 to 11. The week for your activity will be decided in class.

Weighting 10%

Length Allocated time will be

- individual, 20 minutes
- team of two, 37 minutes
- team of three, 51 minutes
- team of four, 62 minutes

Class activities will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

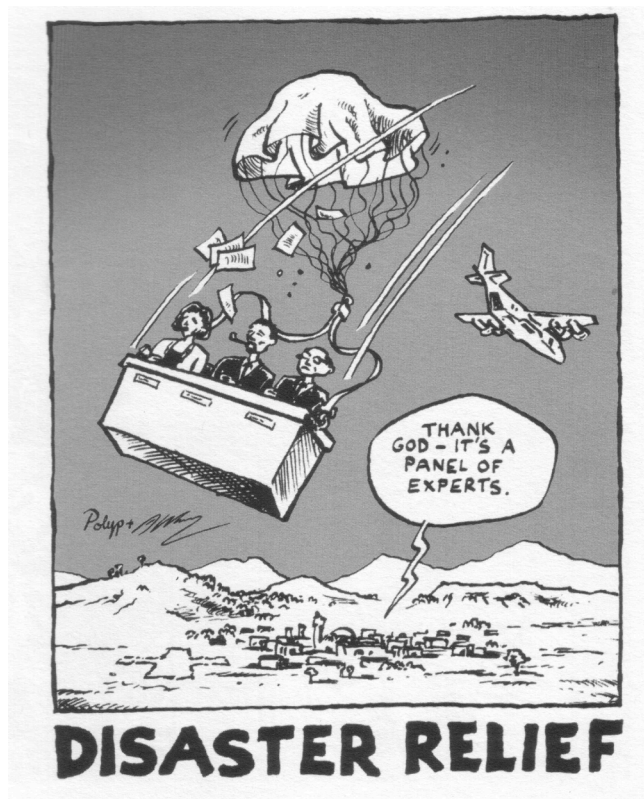
- understanding of the case study
- understanding of theory
- audience involvement
- aids (handouts, slide show, posters, videos, costumes, props, music)
- method of evaluating how well the class has understood your message.

You can work individually or in a team of two or three students (four at the most) to run the class on a topic agreed by Brian. Normally the topic will cover both a case study and a peace/war concept or theory — your choice: see the list on page 8. The case study will normally include a connection with the media but, unlike the shorts, there is no need to focus on a particular media item. For example, you might cover the Kennedy assassination from the point of view of conspiracy theories (or assassination) or a peace rally

from the point of view of nonviolent action.

This is an activity, *not a presentation*.

Here are some examples of activities that are effectively organised to involve the audience, use many aids and evaluate what the class has learned (the third, fourth and fifth assessment criteria). You show understanding of the case study and theory (the first two assessment criteria) by the content and organisation of materials used.



Sample 1

Students are put into groups of three according to the team's prearranged plan. The groups deal with a series of tasks: studying a handout and filling in a questionnaire; drawing a diagram; watching a two-minute video clip and writing a critic's summary comment; playing a game; and preparing questions for the other groups. At the end, each student answers a single probing question; the team picks up the answers.

Sample 2

Each student, on entering the classroom, is given an animal token and a questionnaire. After filling out the questionnaire and depositing it in a box, students go to one of four groups according to their token. Each group spends 12 minutes at each of four stations around the room. At each station, one of the team members runs an activity: a video followed by discussion, a game, a set of handouts followed by a

quiz, and construction of a diagram. At the end, students fill out the same questionnaire in order to see how much they learned.

Sample 3

Each student is given a workbook, with text, pictures, cut-outs and quizzes. Slides are automatically projected on the screen; posters are on the walls; music is playing; a pile of cards is on a table. Some of the workbook exercises require use of information or clues from the slides, posters, songs and cards. Team members are available to answer individual queries. At the end, the team collects the pages of the workbooks filled out by students, leaving the main content of the workbooks for students to take away.

Guidelines

- *Don't* talk to the class about the case study or theory.

Why not? Because it's low on audience involvement, and it's inefficient.

Instead, use a handout with the same information. People can read text in a fraction of the time it takes to say it out loud.

- *Don't* give verbal instructions.

Why not? Because half the class won't be listening and some people won't hear them correctly.

Instead, provide written instructions in a handout, on a poster or a slide. Only give instructions verbally, if necessary, to explain or reinforce written instructions.

- *Don't* show a video for more than a minute or two at a time.

Why not? Because it's low on audience involvement. Viewers quickly switch into passive entertainment mode.

Instead have a quiz or other exercise to fill out during the video, or show a minute's worth of the video, have a break for discussion, then show another minute, etc.

- *Don't* tell the class to "get into groups."

Why not? Because self-selected groups may not be the size or composition that you want.

Instead, decide in advance the size of groups and — possibly — who you want in each one. You can allocate people to groups by some arbitrary criterion, such as birthdays, height or random numbers. Or you can allocate people according to their views about specific issues, such as about war. Or you can select the groups in advance, to get a desired mix of personality types. For example, to foster balanced participation, you might put the most talkative students in a group together, and the quietest ones.

A few specific points:

- Identify sources for any quotes, for example in handouts.

- Plan every detail. For example, if you want responses to a question, you might display the instruction “Everyone write down a response on a slip of paper” rather than “What do you think?” Planning details will make your workshop more engaging.

- Practise in advance to iron out difficulties and check that you can stay within the allotted time. Keeping to time can be a big challenge.

I’ll assume you want each member of your group to have the same mark. Most groups do. But if not, here’s an option. Suppose the mark for a group of three is 67. That’s a total of 201 marks (3 x 67). You can allocate them in some non-equal way (e.g., 64, 64 and 73). See

<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/classes/groupgrade.pdf> for suggestions for making this decision. Working in groups is a vital skill; don’t avoid it because of the marks issue.

Bonus marks!

Your class activity mark will be increased if you get a higher mark on your project report.

To be specific: if your project report mark is higher, we’ll increase your individual class activity mark by half the difference. For example, if your class activity mark is 75 and you get 85 on your project report, we’ll raise your individual class activity mark to 80, half way between 75 and 85. On the other hand, if your project report mark is lower, nothing changes.

The rationale for this is that some students feel held back by group work. So if you do really well in the major assignment, it can pull up your group-work mark.

This applies only to the class activity, where we’ve given strong encouragement to work in groups, and only for those who actually do work in a group.

Project plan

Due date: 24 hours before your week 11 class

Weighting: 10%

Length: 100 words

The project plan is a summary of what you plan to do in your project. Describe your case study, your theory and how you’ll carry out the project.

You can send it to me by email.

If it is satisfactory, your mark for the plan will be the same as for the project report. If not, you’ll be asked to prepare a revised version. If it’s late, you lose 10% per day. If you don’t hand it in, you get zero for this component.

The main purpose of the project plan is to get you thinking about the project early. By all means submit your plan before the due date!

Project report

Due date: 2pm, Wednesday 10 June

Weighting: 40%

Length: 2500 words

Submission: Either

(1) send by express post (posted by 2pm Wednesday 10 June) to Brian Martin, Arts Faculty, University of Wollongong, NSW 2522, or

(2) put under the door to Brian’s office (19.2016).

No special cover sheet is needed. Put your student number on the report — not your own name. In the dialogue, use a pseudonym for yourself and any other MACS390 student.

Undertake a project involving a case study using a war/peace/violence/nonviolence theory or concept covered in the subject, or another theory with my approval.

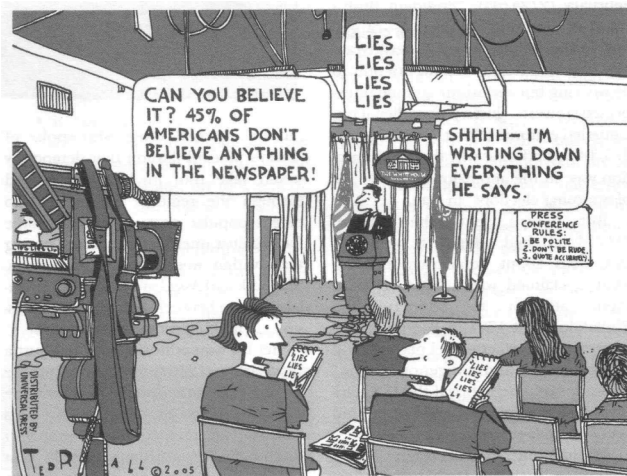
Format: Prepare an information pack for an organisation or community members to help them understand the portrayal or non-portrayal of issues concerning war, peace, violence or nonviolence in the media. You can choose any organisation or people *except* a media or university organisation or members of the university or media.

The pack can be a written text, slide show, leaflet, poster, website or any other suitable format. For a written text, the maximum length is 1000 words. Other formats should cover the equivalent of 1000 words. Use footnotes to give references and to explain points that are complex or not fully treated in the text. (Footnotes do not count in the word total.) When using graphics, include acknowledgement of sources (e.g. web addresses).

Your case study can be historical or contemporary.

For example, you might examine war reporting on the Afghanistan war using Cerulo’s framework. Or you might explain the low level of reporting on nonviolent protests in Israel/Palestine using nonviolence theory. You may wish to supplement the war/peace theory with media theories, for example agenda-setting theory re Israel/Palestine protests.

In developing the pack, you should talk with organisation or community members to find out what sort of things they’d like to know about.



Supplement the pack with a 1500-word dialogue between you, your group members and anyone else relevant about how you chose your case study, how you gathered materials, who you interviewed, what you discovered about the strengths and weaknesses of your theory, any unexpected findings, difficulties, future topics for investigation, etc. The dialogue should be interactive, like a conversation. It is fictional: you write the dialogue rather than recording an actual one. Have a look at good dialogues at www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/classes/.

Interview protocol

Your focus in talking to organisation and community members is on what they would like to know more about. You should take care in discussing any issue that might cause distress. You are not probing anyone's personal experiences of violence, but rather asking about media portrayals or non-portrayals.

In all cases, you are to talk only with adults who are not in a vulnerable category (such as being unemployed or in prison). Participant information sheets, interview consent forms and sample questions will be provided, and ethical and practical aspects of interviewing covered in class.

You are encouraged to work in a team on the project, sharing information collected about case study, theory and interviews. You may choose to write your own individual report. Alternatively, two or three team

members may submit a jointly written pack and separate dialogues or submit separate packs and a jointly written dialogue. Jointly written packs and dialogues should be the same length as individually written ones.

Project reports will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- Understanding of the case study
- Understanding of theory
- Use of sources (about case study and theory)
- Expression and appearance

Excursion

You are invited to attend or observe the Wollongong May Day march on Saturday 2 May to learn about media and nonviolent action. This excursion will count as the equivalent of a normal class. It involves doing a one-minute report, observing what happens during the march, joining a discussion afterwards and subsequently sending a brief report on media coverage of the march. The face-to-face component of the excursion will take place from about 9.30am to 12.30pm in downtown Wollongong. Details will be sent closer to the time.

The excursion is voluntary: you don't have to attend.

Sources for cartoons

Anthony Russo,
<http://www.emich.edu/english/gsp/writing.gif>
 Polyp (Paul Fitzgerald), *Big bad world: cartoon molotovs in the face of corporate rule* (Oxford: New Internationalist Publications, 2002).
 Ted Rall, lies: in *Extra!*, May/June 2005, p. 13.
 Rothco, "We're looking ...": *Punch*, reproduced in Em Griffin, *Making Friends*, p. 117.
 Sipress: *Wishful thinking*, Cartoons by David Sipress (New York: Harper & Row, 1987).
 The box, <http://sha3teely.com/wp-content/uploads/2006/08/box.jpg>

Submission of Assignments

- Students must keep a copy of all work/assignments handed in.
- Essays sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted unless agreed between the subject coordinator and student.

Return of Assignments

- The University's Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment requires that at least one assignment be assessed and returned before Week 9 of session.
- Essays submitted at the end of session will be held by the subject coordinator until the end of week 3 of the following session. After this time, essays may be disposed of.

Academic Consideration

Students who miss a deadline, or fall below the minimum attendance requirements, or otherwise find their work in the subject affected by illness or serious misadventure should lodge a formal request for Academic Consideration via SOLS. The procedures for lodging a request are available at:

<http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/studentacademicconsiderationpolicy.pdf>

Penalty for late submission of work

Late work (i.e. any work required for assessment that has not been given an extension) will be subject to a 10% penalty per day. The penalty is applied to the original mark awarded. Work submitted after seven calendar days will not be marked and will be given a mark of 0.

Plagiarism

Students are responsible for submitting original work for assessment, without plagiarising or cheating, abiding by the University's policy on plagiarism as set out in the University Handbook under Universities Policy Directory and in Faculty Handbooks and subject guides. Plagiarism has led to the expulsion from the University.

For full details about the University's plagiarism policy see www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserule/s/plagiarism.html

Faculty Handbook

The Faculty issues a Handbook free of charge to all students enrolled in an Arts Subject. It contains information on the structure of the Faculty's degrees, the majors offered, the more

important University policies and other matters that may affect your time as a student in the Faculty.

Grievance Procedures

The term "academic grievance" refers to a complaint by a student concerning an act, omission or decision by a member of staff that adversely affects a student's academic experience. Some examples of a grievance include the following: failure to assess work in accordance with specified criteria; administrative error in the collating or recording of marks; failure to address requests for Academic Consideration in accordance with the Academic Consideration Policy; failure of a member of staff to adhere to General Course Rules or requirements of a relevant Code of Practice; failure to adhere to Faculty assessment or examination requirements.

The University and the Faculty of Arts have formal Student Academic Grievance Policies that are to be used *only after informal approaches* have been made to the relevant staff member. If the informal approach has an unsatisfactory outcome the student should follow the procedure outlined in the Faculty of Arts Student Grievance Form.

This form can be downloaded from the UOW website or a copy may be obtained from the Arts Central, Level 1, Building 19, Room 1050. For more information <http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserule/studacgrievpol.html>

Support Services

Both the Faculty and the University offer support services to its undergraduates.

Arts Central

Building 19 Room 1050

phone: 02 4221 5328

fax: 02 4221 5341

Mon – Fri: 8.30am to 5.30pm

Email: fac_arts@uow.edu.au

www.uow.edu.au/arts

For staff contact details, handbooks, administrative forms and general information

Sub Dean

to make an appointment to see the Sub Dean, contact the Sub Dean's Assistant at Arts Central or phone: 02 4221 4838

Course Readers and Textbooks

UniShop – Building 11

phone: 02 4221 8050

fax: 02 4221 8055

unishop.uow.edu.au

Student Administration

Student Central – Building 17

phone: 02 4221 3927

fax: 02 4221 4322

e-mail: studenq@uow.edu.au

www.uow.edu.au/student/centre

www.uow.edu.au/student/sols

Woolyungah Indigenous Centre –

Building 30

phone: 02 4221 3776

fax: 02 4221 4244

www.uow.edu.au/aec

University Library, including the

Faculty Librarian

Building 16

phone: 02 4221 3548

library.uow.edu.au

Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officer

Viv McIlroy - Room 19.1075

Phone: 4221 3635

The Student Equity & Diversity Liaison officer provides support when dealing with:

- student welfare, both domestic & international;
- EdStart (grants for financially disadvantaged students);
- Liaison for the Disability program, Counselling, Learning Development, Careers etc.
- Developing social networks for students within faculties.

Learning Assistance

Learning Resource Centre – 19.G102

phone: 02 4221 3977

www.uow.edu.au/student/services/ld

Careers Service – Building 11

phone: 02 4221 3325

www.uow.edu.au/careers

Counselling Service – Building 11

(level 3)

phone: 02 4221 3445

www.uow.edu.au/student/services/cs