

# Media, war and peace

## STS390

### Spring session, 2005

## SUBJECT OUTLINE

### Classes

Mondays, 9.30-12.30, 19.G005

Tuesdays, 16.30-19.30, 1.G05

Wednesdays, 15.30-18.30, 19.1017

Fridays, 10.30-13.30, 19.1067

### Subject coordinator

Brian Martin, room 19.2016

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*Web* <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/>

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

### Objectives

On successful completion of this subject, students will be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of war and peace journalism, military censorship and media management
2. understand and apply theories explaining media dynamics and international politics
3. investigate media coverage on war and peace, violence and nonviolence
4. intervene, if desired, in public debates about war and peace, violence and nonviolence

### Additional information

The *Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Handbook 2005* is a supplement to these subject notes. See in particular material on staff consultation, student representation, assignments, assessment, Sub-Dean matters, and plagiarism.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For more information, see <http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/plagiarism.html>.

See also Code of Practice—Teaching and Assessment, [http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/codesofprac/teaching\\_code.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/codesofprac/teaching_code.html)

You are not required to pass every component of assessment to pass the subject. I will grant extensions only when applications for special consideration are made through SOLS. Late penalty: 10 marks per day out of 100.

### Content and theories

The content in this subject 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: advertisements, dramas, comedies, etc. It

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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 using in various ways, called theories or perspectives. We will cover five theories in weeks 1 to 5. 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.

### • Week 1. Conspiracy theories

I'll circulate some information in class. You can easily find a lot more.

### • Week 2. Backfire

Some attacks backfire against the attackers. This is based on my own current research. You can read articles about this theory at <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/backfire.html>. See especially the articles on the invasion of Iraq and the beating of Rodney King.

### • Week 3. Deciphering violence

Karen Cerulo has analysed the standard ways that violence is described in stories. Her book is in the reserve 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 listed under STS390.

### • Week 4. Communication technology for nonviolent struggle

Some types of communication technology are more useful for nonviolent struggle; others are more useful to militaries or repressive governments. See chapter five in my book *Technology for Nonviolent Struggle* (<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01tnvs/>).

### • Week 5. Lying

A relevant article of mine is at <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/03sa.html>

The following books are in the reserve 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

## Assessment

Task	Format	Length	Weighting	Due Date
Attendance			Pass/fail	Every week
Participation	Weekly reading reports	1 minute	10%	Each week
Shorts	Two reports or activities	5 minutes	20%	By weeks 6 and 10
Class activity	Class time organised by student group	20 minutes	20%	Allocated in class
Project plan	Summary	150 words	10%	Week 11
Project report	Article and dialogue	2500 words	40%	noon 24 October

### Note re group work

University regulations restrict group work to no more than 30% of total assessment. For example, you can work in a group for the class activity (20%) and one short report (10%).

## **Attendance**

You should attend at least 80% of classes. (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. Students with less than 80% class attendance may be given a fail grade.

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 6 to 12.

## **Participation**

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Each class will decide a sequence of topics. Each week, you are expected to read a substantial article (more than 1000 words) on the topic — or the equivalent in another medium — and give a one-minute verbal report on it to the class.

## **Shorts**

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**Due dates:** In class, one short by week 6 and another by week 10.

**Length:** 5 minutes per person

Each short is a brief report or activity. Each one covers a current event in the media and how it relates to a theory (as covered in weeks 1 to 5) or to a relevant concept such as militarism, pacifism, conflict resolution, genocide, social defence, aggression, terrorism, just war, torture, peacekeeping, military censorship, war journalism, positive peace, and realism (in international relations). Be prepared to respond to comments and questions.

You should present one or more relevant items from the media. These may be newspaper or magazine articles, video clips, email messages, etc.

You should also refer to at least two sources, such as books or scholarly articles, about the theory/concept.

Verbal reports must be spoken from memory or dot-point notes, not read from text. Alternatively, you may design an activity for the class: you don't have to speak at all!

Timing: 10 minutes is the maximum time per person.

You are entitled to redo any short that is less than 50, for a maximum mark of 50.

***Shorts will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)***

- selection and understanding of media items
- understanding of theory/concept
- application of theory/concept to the media items
- organisation and expression.

## **Class activity**

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You can work individually or in a group of two or three students to run a class on a topic agreed by me. Topics normally should involve theory and a case study. The class can be run as a debate, game, quiz, small group exercises or any other activity that helps others to learn. You should not stand and talk, but should design one or more participatory activities. Consider using posters, handouts, tapes and videos. You should also include some method to evaluate how well the class has *understood* what you are trying to get across (not just how well they liked the activity). This is important!

Time allocated for each class activity will be 15 minutes times the number of group members, e.g. 45 minutes for a three-person group.

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

- knowledge of case study
- understanding of theory
- audience involvement
- aids (handouts, slides, posters, videos, etc.)
- method of evaluating how well the class has understood your message.

## **Project plan**

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A summary of what you plan to do in your project is due in class in week 11. If it is satisfactory, your mark for the plan will be the same as for the project report. If not, I'll ask you to prepare a revised version. If you don't hand it in, you get zero for this component. The main purpose of this is to get you thinking about the project early. By all means hand in your plan sooner!

## **Project report**

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**Due date:** noon 24 October

**Length:** 2500 words

**Submission:** Either (1) send by express post (posted by noon on 24 October) to Brian Martin, STS, University of Wollongong, NSW 2522, or (2) put under the door to my office (19.2016).

Put your name on a cover sheet but not elsewhere on the report.

Undertake a project involving a case study in the field of media/war/peace, analysing it using a theory covered in the subject, or another theory with my approval. For example, you might analyse texts using Cerulo's framework or analyse a war using the backfire framework. Your project should involve archival work (if you are dealing with a historical case) and/or interviews and/or observations and/or participation. If desired, you may undertake your project as a form of advocacy research or participatory action research. You may need to submit a human research ethics application.

You are encouraged to work in a team on the project, but you must write your own individual report. If desired, reports in a team project can be linked together. See me about this.

Format: Write an opinion piece in the style of a feature article in the "Opinion" page in *The Australian* or the "Comment" page in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Aim at 700 words, with a maximum length of 1000 words. Follow this with three letters to the editor responding to the article (combined length less than 300 words). Use footnotes to give references and explain points that are complex or not fully treated in the text of the article or letters. Supplement the article and letters with a 1500-word dialogue between you, your group members and anyone else relevant about your research methods, use of theory, unexpected findings, etc.

You are entitled to revise and resubmit any full-length report that falls short of a pass, for a maximum mark of 50.

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

- knowledge of case study
- understanding of theory
- use of sources
- organisation and expression.