ATS3108 Media Culture
Library Research & Essay Writing Workshop

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Workshop Overview

- What do you want to work on?
- Getting started
- Develop and refine your essay topic
- Research
- Develop and refine your argumentation
- Writing introductions and conclusions
- Essay structure
- Citing and referencing
Where are you up to?
Your assignment

Due date: Week 12

Details of task: Essay on a topic to be discussed with seminar leader

Word limit: 2,000 (English or German)

Value: 60%
Getting started

An essay is the opportunity for you to demonstrate your scholarly knowledge and academic skills, including:

- Language skills (accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary, creativity or elegance)
- Knowledge of and ability to critique literature, and cultural history at large (creative or theoretical)
- Your ability to make an argument within the context of scholarly works (with reference to that literature).

It's your choice whether you answer a self-set question, explain an area of knowledge, or analyse or contrast issues.

- **You must engage with the literature and cultural history at large though – no matter what.**
Criteria for marking

**Argument**
Exhibits strong links, avoids description, has logic

**Research**
Depth and amount of work done to engage with the literature

**Theory**
Skilled at understanding concepts and terminology

**Style**
Ability to write clearly and coherently
Finding and articulating your essay topic
The process of finding your topic

- What interests you?
- Preliminary research
- Refine topic/question
- Further research
- Refine topic/question
Finding your essay question

To get started you need to ask yourself two questions:

- What do I know?
- What do I need to know?

There are many approaches to answering these, but a mind map can be a useful tool to visualise your ideas.

Here’s our example of an initial mind map:
Now I need to start narrowing it down.

By overlaying a second brainstorm of my own interests, I can begin to see where I’ll focus my attention.
Activity

Examples of media you might consider using:

- film
- video
- art
- photography
- music
- literature
- advertising
- language
- internet
- social media
- virtual reality
- ...

For this activity, we’ll look at music videos.
Apply Flusser’s theory to these music video clips.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wd9vU1KaQiY

https://youtu.be/5R682M3ZEyk

https://youtu.be/qrO4YZeyl0I

• Similarities/differences between the music videos?
• Are there particular ideas in Flusser’s work that you can apply to the clips?
Research

Before launching into research, you need to decide
- which **theorist/s** you’d like to focus on
- perhaps what **media** you’d like to apply it to.

You’ll then need to do research on both of these to come up with a topic and argument.

- Identify the academic literature on the theorist/theory
- Identify the literature on the German cultural history (there will be some cross over)
- Find the debates and discussions
- Think about the themes and decide how you are going to proceed.
German Studies: ATS3108 - Introduction to the Study of Media
Culture from a German Studies Perspective

Media Culture
Introduction to the study of media culture
from a German studies perspective

Media Theory

Handbuch Medienwissenschaft by Jure Schüller
Call Number: Clayton - Matheson Call
no 302 23 5302H 2014
ISBN: 3476024121
Publication Date: 2014

Communication in History by David Crowley, Paul Heyer
Call Number: Clayton - Matheson Call
no 302 205 C663C 2011
ISBN: 9780205693962
Publication Date: 2011

Media Studies: The Essential Resource by Sarah Casey Benyahia, Alibghal Gardiner, Philip Rayner, Pular Wall
ISBN: 9781136259876
Publication Date: 2014
available as eBook

Understanding Media Theory by Kevin Williams
Call Number: Clayton - Matheson Call
no 302.23 801 W724U 2003
ISBN: 0340719044
Publication Date: 2003

Resources

- Google Scholar
  Google Scholar uses the familiar Google search engine to search peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities and other scholarly organizations.
- Communication & Mass media complete
  Offers information from over 600 journals in communication, mass media and related fields, includes abstracts, indexing, bibliographical citations and author profiles, as well as full text from more 240 titles.
- JSTOR: the scholarly journal archive.
  Intended as a comprehensive archive of important scholarly journal literature, built by over 1,700 worldwide participants, including major Australian universities. Coverage includes: the arts, sciences, business, ecology and botany, language and literature, and music, extending from 17th century in some cases.
- Arts & humanities citation index (A&HCI)
  Arts & Humanities Citation Citation Index is a multidisciplinary index to the journal literature of the arts and humanities. It fully covers 1,160 of the world’s leading arts and humanities journals. It also indexes individually selected, relevant items from over 6,000 major science and social science journals.

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/german-studies/ATS3108-media-culture
Search tips

TRUNCATION
Use the asterisk at the end of part of a word to find word variations
relig* finds religion, religious, etc...

AND
Join words using AND to find resources with BOTH search terms
Schwitters AND relig*

PHRASE SEARCH
Use double quotation marks to find phrases
“World War”
“religiöse Motive”

OR
Join words using OR to find resources with EITHER OR BOTH search terms
writer OR poet
Find secondary sources

- Use the primary literary texts you have chosen (author name, title)

- Use the keywords from the question and your brainstorming (try to find synonyms or related terms)

- Use reference lists from your readings, recommendations, encyclopaedias, and other suitable articles you find
Your turn!
Now you can start formulating your essay topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Critique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media culture in Germany</td>
<td>Too broad. What media culture? What part of Germany? When in Germany? How about the Cold War?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Media is the message' and feminist music videos</td>
<td>Too vague - what do I mean by this? Also I wanted to look at Flusser and this is McLuhan. Maybe there is some way to work it in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist subversion of media</td>
<td>The problem is that I think all their arguments are about humanising and situating, so talking about feminist subversion is only going to be considered in terms of control and patriarchy. Interesting idea though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading music videos and Flusser</td>
<td>Interesting idea, but no real connection to the theory, or obvious connection. Was very hard to research as most use McLuhan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem of historical teleology and media theory</td>
<td>Huge, far too big. It could be an entire doctoral thesis. Maybe some element of this might be useful if I go and look at some examples of media? Make the topic above the case study and try to narrow it down from there?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essay structure: Structure and argumentation
What do you want to focus on?

You’ve all written essays before. Cast your mind back….

• What kind of feedback have you received?
• Anything to do with structure?
  (Writing intros, conclusions, body paras, logical sequencing of ideas …. etc.)
• Anything to do with argumentation?
  (Clarity or strength of argument, providing adequate evidence and examples, extending your ideas, analysing evidence…?)
Argumentation

An argument:

- States a position
- Gives reasons backed with evidence as support
- Considers the opposing arguments
- Answers your question!
Argumentation
Questions to ask yourself

What is the question actually asking you?

What are the key reasons for your position?

What evidence do you have to support your argument?

Does any specific scholarship help you articulate your point? Why or why not?

What theoretical ideas inform your argument? Explain.

What are the objections to your argument?
Make a plan

• How have you gone about this in the past?

• What do your essay plans look like?
Essay writing

Conclusion

Re state
Rearticulate
Ruminate

Conclusion

Restate the main premise of issue

Rearticulate your argument in regards to the issue

Broad statement talking to the unit description and its goals
Essay writing

Activity – intros and conclusions
Common issues in essay writing

- Paragraphs that are too long/short.
- ‘Upside down’ paragraphs: the topic sentence is at the end.
- No evidence to support points; no specific examples.
- Avoiding the topic.
- No logical sequence.
Editing and proofreading
Citing and referencing
Citing and referencing

Citing and referencing: MLA 8th

Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide

The MLA system uses in-text citations rather than footnotes or endnotes. The citations in-text are very brief, usually just the author’s family name and a relevant page number. These citations correspond to the full references in the list of works cited at the end of the document.

Instructions and examples in this MLA guide are based on more detailed information in:
Also refer to the MLA Style Center.

In-text citations - general points

- If the author’s name is mentioned in the sentence, only cite the page number.
- If the author’s name is not mentioned in the sentence, cite both the name and the page number.
- Font and capitalisation must match that in the reference list.
- Long quotations (more than four lines) should be indented.
- If you are citing more than one reference at the same point in a document, separate the references with a semicolon e.g. (Smith 150; Jackson 41).
- If the work has no author, use the title.
- If you are citing two works by the same author, put a comma after the author’s name and add title words. eg (Smyth, “Memories of Motherhood” 77) to distinguish between them in the in-text citation. Do this when citing each of the sources throughout the piece of writing.
- If two authors have the same surname, use their first initial e.g. (G. Brown 26).

http://guides.lib.monash.edu/citing-referencing/mla8
Editing and proofreading your work

Editing involves **improving the 'big picture'** of your assignment: whether it addresses the task requirements fully, how the paragraphs are structured and flow and so on.

Proofreading **focuses on specific details** like spelling, sentence structure, referencing etc.
Need more help?
Visit Research and Learning Online

Essay and Assignment Writing:
http://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments

Editing and Proofreading:
https://www.monash.edu/rlo/research-writing-assignments/writing/editing-and-proofreading/editing-and-proofreading
Need more help?

Research & Learning Point @ Matheson Library
10-15 minute consultation with a learning skills adviser and/or librarian, open to all students

Weeks 3-11
Monday to Thursday 12pm-6pm
Friday 12pm-4pm

Week 12 & Swot Vac
Monday to Friday 12pm-4pm
German Studies
Library Drop-in sessions
Matheson Library T1

(ask at the Information Point if you don't know how to find the room).

Drop by if you have any questions or issues with your assignment for German Studies. We can help with research, finding and expressing your argument, essay structure, writing introduction and conclusion, citing and referencing, and anything else in regards to your assignment - with the exception of proofreading ;)
Before we finish

Post-class survey
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